

# From a Certain Point of View

Linda Deneroff  
1800 Ocean Pkwy.  
Brooklyn, NY 11223

I've been wondering about this penchant of comparing the SW trilogy to (and forgive me if I seem to exaggerate) every piece of English literature in existence. It seems to me that all these comparisons are intended to convince the researcher more than the reader that SW is a good thing, a cause, almost. If SW can't stand on its own as a body of work, then it doesn't deserve to. The "If it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it must be a duck" syndrome doesn't apply here. If a work--not necessarily SW--is not internally coherent, eminently satisfying, and inherently integral, it don't mean diddly how much one tries to compare it to another body of work. I don't mean to say that the SW trilogy isn't coherent or satisfying or integral; I leave that to others to argue. But I get tired of arguments that go nowhere in terms of analyzing the whys and wherefores of the trilogy itself.

I once raised the question in JUNDLAND WASTES (one of the later issues) just before RETURN OF THE JEDI premiered, as to the future of SW fandom if JEDI (a) answered all our questions, or (b) proved dissatisfying. Perhaps an interesting topic now for SE readers would be a discussion of the status of our fandom and where we want to take it and ourselves. Let's broaden the discussion, guys. We've argued the movies to death without changing most people's minds, but where do we go from here?

On this note, I'm willing to start, by extending the argument regarding Sandra Necchi's contention about the rights of droids, which I enjoyed very much. I should like to go off on a few tangents of my own and see where they lead.

It's always been my feeling that the torture of the droids in JEDI was there for one reason only. Obi-wan tells Luke that Darth Vader is more machine than man. If this is the case, how does one "kill" a machine or cause a machine to feel pain? Obvious. Let the viewer know in advance that droids (or machines) in this universe experience pain. I have trouble with this for several reasons: (1) it isn't necessary. Even today, in "reality", we are teaching paraplegics to walk using prostheses. Biofeedback is also being used to extend the senses in this regard; (2) when Luke is testing his new prosthetic hand at the end of TESB, he's reacting to external stimuli on that hand. It's important to remember that the brain feels pain, not the segment of the body receiving the stimuli. It seemed obvious to me that in the Swars universe, prosthetics and bionics had been perfected, thereby making the torture scene in JEDI irrelevant.

Let's also look at the word "droid" for a moment. The origin of this word is "android" which

meant a being artificially created in the image of a man or woman. Usually this meant "vat grown" or some such, mechanical creations being termed "robot". STAR TREK started the blurring of the definitions, and STAR WARS certainly finished it. One might call Threepio an android, but certainly not Artoo. Regardless, I don't think there is any doubt they are mechanical, and, we are told, they feel pain. Well, how about Luke's landspeeder? What about the Millennium Falcon? Do they feel any pain? (Certainly they have sensors, and the Falcon spoke a language to Threepio.) Look how many times Han's ship has been shot at! And what does one do (again, in our present reality) with a machine that's worn out or no longer serves its purpose? Why, we throw it out (TVs, tape recorders, pencil sharpeners) or we trade it in (cars, computers). If we're going to argue that droids have rights, we first have to define what makes them either eligible or ineligible. It can't be the fact that Threepio speaks because Artoo doesn't (not as we know it; and neither does the Falcon, again, as we know it). It can't be intelligence, because we've seen computers all over the place, and yet it's obvious they're considered simply machines. So for the sake of making a coherent argument here, either for or against the rights of droids, we need to start with what makes Artoo and Threepio (and by extension, all droids) different. In fact, what's a droid?

## GIZMO

Mary Keever  
5601 Lone Star  
League City, TX 77573

December 5, 1985

Well, it's late, I'm in my Gizmo nightshirt and I'm bleary-eyed. Yep, I just finished SE#10. Wow, what a HUGE issue! Great, as usual. ((Ed's note: And bigger than I ever intend for this sucker to be again! Believe me, this one paid for my printer's Christmas!))

I hope everyone's holidays were joyous. Enjoyed all the articles, especially Sandi Jones' article, "Luke's Responsibilities." Luke is my favorite character, so this really hit home. I liked the way it was set up, i.e., what he did/what he could have done.

The interview with Dale Pollack was interesting, as I still haven't read SKYWALKING. However, the

interviewer was a real gibroni! Sheesh!

Congrats, Carolyn G!!

Hee, hee, really loved your Christmas 'toon, Cheree. I've been asking for one of those 6 ft. stockings with Luke inside for the past 2 years. So far, Santa hasn't heard me.

I've really enjoyed the pictures in the last few issues. It's nice to see what everyone looks like.

Lin Ward: Liked what you said about more than one way to believe in/use the Force, just as we have many different religions to celebrate God. Very well put.

I think that in normal times, Jedi children were trained from birth. Maybe even before. People now read to children from birth and I've recently read about teaching while they are in the womb. Supposedly, the earlier you start, the more quickly the child will learn to read, speak, etc. It seems like the Jedi children would already be above average so the training would have to start young. Any other opinions?

Quick, someone clue me in to the "Slow Boat to Bespin" incident. I just recently bought a second-hand copy of GUARDIAN with those two stories (which I loved). What was the stink?

Looks like lots of us are looking forward to TREMOR #3 with its Darkside section. Can't wait, Cheree! ((Ed: Wait'll you see the Dark Luke Jenni Hennig did for the "cover." All I could say when I saw it was, "Ooooooooooooo!")

Michelle: I believe Luke's Jedi ability/talents were blocked from him. I think Ben looked after him. I mean, he was on Tatooine to make sure Luke wasn't "discovered". Or, what if Owen or Beru were Jedi and their mission in life was to keep Luke blocked from Vader? A deathbed promise to Luke's mom, perhaps?

I'm interested in everyone's opinions on THE EWOKS: THE BATTLE FOR ENDOR. I really enjoyed it. It was so much better than last year's show. I felt it captured so much more of the STAR WARS magic. At first, I didn't like Wicket speaking English. It just didn't seem right. But, then, it grew on me. ((Ed again: I was very pleasantly surprised by this one. As to how these two shows fit into the SW universe, I believe they are set a few years after ROTJ. The Alliance has moved on, things have returned more or less to normal, except that Endor has now been "opened" to non-Endorian species. The Ewoks seem to have moved away from their redwood forests into a more temperate forest area bordering grasslands. The planet doesn't seem to be on the main space lanes, as evidenced by the two shipwrecks we have seen that had little hope of rescue. More important is Wicket's progression in dealing with humans. When he first saw Leia, he acted as if he'd never seen a human before, was suspicious and wary. But when he came upon Cindel and her family, he and the other Ewoks seemed very familiar with humankind. And, now in this new show, he is beginning to speak English. It will be interesting to see where (if anywhere) this is leading.))

Matthew: Welcome Aboard. Enjoyed your comments on "once you start down the Dark path, forever..." Yes, maybe a "fallen" Jedi had never overcome the Dark. Anakin was a first.

And I liked what you had to say about Palpatine wanted Luke to serve him, not rival him. Luke's strength and belief in goodness saved him (and Anakin).

Ronda: Your suggestion of Darth and Samantha Stevens had me in stitches!

Sandi: Loved your analog of the Force to fire.

Annie Wortham: Hullo. Always enjoy your letters. Such fun.

The illo above Bev Clark's letter on page 43 is wonderful.

Re: "Always in motion is the future." I've always felt that the visions the Jedi see are only one possibility. Hence, "always in motion..." Meaning this is one possibility.

I've got a new one: The Holy Sisters of Luke's Black Glove. (Are you listening, Janet? Hee!) Does that one black glove do anything for the rest of you?

Tim: Hello and how are you? How about "Woman Dead Thirty Years Gives Birth to Healthy Baby"?!

Just what is your kind of weird?

Love your idea of an all male zine. How do you know no one would want to read your "Mary Sue" story? Sounds good to me. (Have you ever read THE DARK TOWER: THE GUNSLINGER by Stephen King? It's hard to find, but well worth the search. I think you'd enjoy it.)

Also, are you going to Conzineence? ((Ed: Plug, plug... Hey, y'all come on down to Dallas in July! This is shaping up to be Son of MediaWest\*Con! The more the merrier! Oh, and, Jenni--you'll get my bill.))

Pat Nussman: Glad to see you see Leia as "going for the gusto" post-JEDI. I just can't see her tied down to the Rebellion forever.

Jeanine: Hi! Where's your article? (Don't shoot!)

To quote Ed Grimly: "Well, I must say." Once again--wow, what an issue! Till next time, fly casual!

## BRAINGLESS DEVIANTS?

Michelle Malkin  
6649 Castor Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19149

December 5, 1985

Good issue! 42 pages of double-columned, reduced type letters! It took me ages to read it all, and I enjoyed every second. As to the cartoons, I could just imagine Harrison laughing himself sick over those two Brenda Starr strips. ((Ed: Thanks to Joann Callahan who passed those on to me months ago, but I couldn't squeeze them in till now.)) Your cartoon of a mystified Santa delivering a very disgruntled Han to a very lecherous you as a Christmas present had me going through an absolute hysteria of recognition. For years now, I've been saying that all I want for Christmas, Chanukah, my birthday, Arbor Day, any day, is a burlap bag full of Han Solo. C'mon, folks, is that really too much to ask for? Once that cat was let out of the bag, I'd do my best to keep him from looking disgruntled. I promise! Oops, sorry, I keep forgetting that this is a family zine. A tip of the Malkin hat to Jenni, Samia and Mary for having the courage to publish their "Question Authority" guest editorial. That's exactly what GL says to do, but when we do, he doesn't like it. How else can this be interpreted but as a slap in the faces of his greatest fans?

I mean it when I say his greatest fans, too. I personally have nothing but admiration for the man who overcame all kinds of problems to become a famous movie director and producer and creator of SW. But, my admiration ends at the point where he throws that admiration back in our faces and treats us like brainless deviants--unimportant brainless deviants at that! After all, what have we fen ever done but see his movies over and over and over and over and give him tons of free publicity? As I've said before, the man could do with a good lo-o-ong discussion with Gene Roddenberry. The transcript of the Dale Pollack radio interview was fascinating. My thanks to the taper and both typists. Having read and enjoyed Sandra Necchi's "Race Relations in the SW Universe" article before it was published, I read it again and appreciated it even more. A lot of heavy research goes into whatever articles Sandi writes and it shows. "Luke's Responsibilities" by Sandi Jones is another article that had to be written. It covered a lot of territory that has been brought up ad infinitum in LoCs, but never gone into in quite this way. A brilliant idea and extremely well done.

Lin Ward: The Luke we first saw on Tatooine struck me as a person who was pretty much ground down by his uncle. If he had stayed on Tatooine and followed his uncle's wishes, he would probably have ended up a very bitter, unhappy person. I'm sure that Owen Lars meant well, but even the love of his Aunt Beru wouldn't have been enough to save him in such a case. Can you imagine the results of this if ANH had never happened? Leia and the Rebellion would be hiding out from the Death Star, Vader for some reason (maybe the Emperor knows about Luke's existence) goes to Tatooine and finds Luke, he figures out that this bitter young man is his son, convinces him to join him (probably not a very hard thing to do by then), trains him in the Dark Side, etc., etc., etc. Doggone, it looks like I've gone and come up with another story idea in the pages of SE again! Anyway, the point I was trying to make was that Luke at the beginning to ANH reminds me of the children of the People in Zenna Henderson's story "Pottage". The children (and their parents) were miserable because they had to hide very important parts of themselves--psychic abilities and memories that were a natural part of them. Luke appears to have been aware of his psychic abilities, but he did know that he was being held back by his uncle from living the kind of life he wanted or learning what he wanted to know. Given enough time and repression, along with his innate sense of responsibility to others, Luke would have given up and become the farmer his uncle wanted and a very unhappy person. Loved your ideas about the reasons behind the Clone Wars. We've got another good idea for a one-shot zine--the causes of the Clone Wars. Then again, if anyone really got into such an idea, it would have to develop into an entire novel at least. About old Jedi elitism, I wonder if whatever kind of group Luke forms will even be Jedi. Going back to the same old thing could simply lead to the same old downfall. That's something else for writers to think of: what will take the place of the Jedi? My own idea is that everyone with esper talent will be trained to use it from birth--an idea I've mentioned in SE before and which will be at least mentioned in my series. I wonder what ideas others have about the future of the Jedi. My idea about Dagobah existing on another plane is again from my series, but I could swear that I first read it somewhere in a letterzine.

Maybe I did get the idea from BRIGADOON! I love that movie! (Just about anything with Gene Kelly in it, in fact.)

Cheree: In my response to Tim Blaes, the sentence should have read: With what kind of ruling power? ((Ed: Oops--sorry 'bout that.))

Matthew Whitney: Ye gads, another male of the species! Welcome aboard the good ship Letterzine! Thank you for your kind remarks about KR, and thanks also to Janet Madden for recommending it to you. Good point in your letter about the Emperor not just wanting to turn Luke to the Darkside but to serve as well. Any other way and Luke would have been a continuous threat to his power. Your idea about a fallen Jedi never having returned to the Lightside before was also a good one. It made me wonder if the way a Jedi (or anyone else) fell to the Darkside could affect their possible return to the Lightside. For instance, if Anakin was tricked and nearly driven insane by Palpatine (or whoever the Emperor is), might this not have affected his ability to reject him and the Darkside later on when he went through some kind of healing (the re-awakening of buried feelings and memories). Such a person wouldn't be the same as someone who consciously decides that bad is better than good out of simple greed.

Ronda Henderson: Most new fen are intimidated by Big Nosed...er...Name Fans when they first join a fandom. I know that I was. When I found myself included in that category simply because I edited a SW zine, I had to stop and think why I still felt like the same person I was before the zine. And then, shock of shocks, to rediscover myself among the simple "fans" when I stopped publishing my zine. I don't know if my heart can take all this! To reach the fannish heights, only to be thrust back down again. Hells, if you can't even be a big fish in a small pond, what's left in life? Sigh. ((Ed: You're still a Big Name Fan to me, Mickey.))

Sandi Jones: Excellent point about Owen Lars deliberately trying to keep Luke away from the Academy for his own protection. If his talents as a pilot were anything like his father's, he would have been noticed by the Imps. And, how would Luke then explain his name? (Gods, what I could say about the use of Luke's real name could fill a book!) Have only seen one episode of the Ewok cartoon show (which I think of as "Tarzana of the Ewoks", since it was about a young Ewok who was separated from her mother and baby sister and then lived with and defended the wild animals until her rediscovery by the other Ewoks) and was very impressed by it. The animation was good and the story was not only interestingly told but had a moral to it. Way above average for Saturday morning fare.

Sally Syrjala: I've always thought of the SW people as a triad, just as I did with the STAR TREK people, in a sort of psychological set: Luke and Kirk correspond to intuition, Leia and Spock to reason, and Han and Bones to emotion. Thinking of them in these terms, it shouldn't surprise anyone that, since Han is my favorite SW character, McCoy is my favorite ST character. Both characters appear to have gone through a terrible injury to their personal esteem somewhere in their past and try to cover up their true feelings with an armor that refuses to do its job. Both care deeply about their friends (Han may needle Luke, but he helps him to grow up; McCoy may needle Spock, but he helps him to bring out his emotions--a form of growing up). Both are willing to sacrifice their lives for their friends (several times apiece, in fact). And both

reach final maturity when they truly fall in love (Han with Leia, McCoy with Natira of the plastic ponytail). Both are willing to make sacrifices for their love (Han is willing to give up Leia for the sake of her happiness when he thinks she's in love with Luke, McCoy is willing to leave Natira so that she can serve her people). (I just got this cock-eyed image of Arnold Stang's voice coming from McCoy's mouth saying, "It's bigger den both of us!" You'd have to be damn close to 40 years old to even understand that reference.)

Carole Regine: Good idea you and Danaline Bryant have about Jedi taking apprentices but having those with the most potential trained by Jedi Masters. Perhaps if different Jedi have different talents, each individual Jedi should just train someone with the same talents.

Carolyn Gollodge: Wow! Fantastic thought about Yoda being the one who told Luke to "see" his friends' fate in the first place. I tell ya, there's more to that little green squirt than meets the eye. I have a feeling that Yoda was one of the people who could see directly into the future in a straight line, but he wasn't aware that Luke was a focal point--the kind of person history revolves around. Luke kept changing history and gumming up whatever it was Yoda had seen. Oh well, it's just an idea. Hmmm, let's see--if Han and Leia are focal points, too, and you put the three of them together... Poor Yoda, he never stood a chance. What's a secular humanist, you ask? Gads, I don't know if I'm up to giving that question a really decent answer. I won't go by any book interpretations or definitions; just my own. A secular humanist is someone who doesn't believe in a supernatural self-aware creative spirit but does believe in natural law and loving, helping and advancing humanity (to me that means intelligent life anywhere in the universe). It also means that I don't believe in plundering or wasting resources or taking advantage of or mistreating less evolved lifeforms or people from less advanced civilizations or countries. Ronald Reagan wouldn't like me, I'm proud to say. And, no, I don't want to get into a religious, philosophical or political debate with anyone in the pages of SE. This is a SW zine. I'm simply answering Carolyn's question.

Tim Blaes: Ya got guts, kid! I back you completely in what you said about the treatment of Sandra Necchi in SCOUNDREL (I saw the letters she was sent by the editor) and agree with you 100% on the accountability of letterzine editors (or any other kind of editor, for that matter).

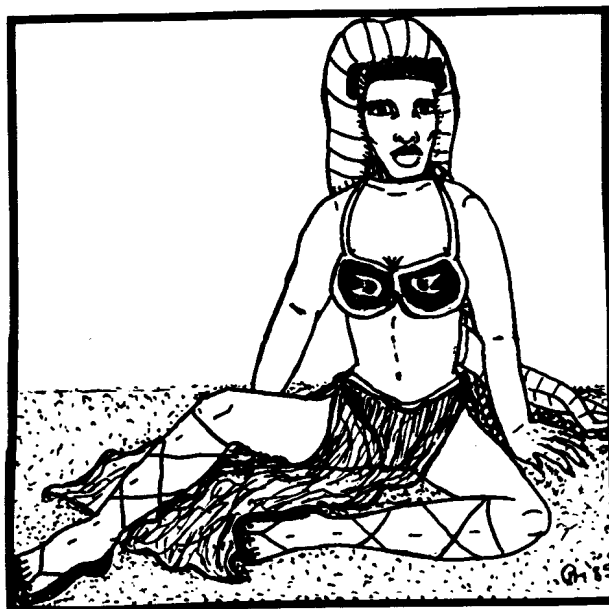
Pat Nussman: It's been several years since I read WIZARD OF EARTHSEA, and I don't think I really understood all the psychological meanings behind the story. But, since you and a couple other friends have recently pointed out the similarities between Ged and Luke, I've been wanting to read the entire series. Like you, I prefer to think of Luke as having a "flavor of the dark" to him. This doesn't mean that I think he is Darkside, merely that he comes equipped with all the strengths and weaknesses of every human being. He isn't a god, just as Han and Leia aren't gods--they are all people.

Jenni Henny Penny: The sky is falling!! Oops, sorry, that's another story. Um, how about any kind of esper triggering other espers (Jedi or not) who either had their abilities deliberately blocked off or just aren't aware of their existence? And, of course, there's always puberty. That's good for triggering a whole lot of things (clean up your thoughts, Jenni. Tsk.). Actually, I used both

puberty and a bad experience to trigger esper abilities in a young Palpatine story. What was the name of the zine that one is going to appear in? Far something-or-other... Just had a nice thought. Can you imagine a whole bunch of us showing up at Media-West\*Con with T-shirts that said "Moral Accomo-" on the front and "-dationist" on the back? It would drive the "moral litmus" people crazy!

Jean Stevenson: The reason why so many people won't accept certain comparisons, such as both Darth Vader and Luke Skywalker both wore black, therefore Luke is fallen to or leaning toward the Darkside, is that such comparisons don't always work. In this particular case, for all we know black could simply be the color Jedi novices wear. We just don't know. In a lot of old westerns, the baddies wore black. Does that mean that Hopalong Cassidy and Zorro were villains, too? Their entire outfits were black. If this seems to be stretching the point a bit, it's simply in return for a lot of other people doing the same with SW. However, I will concede to your point about angels dancing on the blade of a lightsaber. Actually, I kind of like your imagery--as long as the little sprites don't solidify and get a hotfoot! Getting back to comparisons for a moment, there is nothing wrong with making comparisons. We all do at various times, but we don't have to agree with each other about them. (Gods, Hoppy and Zorro even wore the dreaded black hats! If I ever find out that they were really bad guys who misled me throughout my childhood, I'll be totally shattered!)

Cheree: Thanks again for such a good issue of SE. There were other writers that I would have liked to respond to, but this letter is long enough already. I did want to comment that I noticed the absence of certain writers who usually appear in every issue of SE and did not in this one. If they do send in LOCs for the next issue, I can only hope that they will be peaceful ones. A lot of people in this issue wrote in to disagree with several ideas that they hold dear, and I have my fingers crossed that any reaction to this won't be of the going for the jugular variety. It's way past time for us all to learn to agree to disagree in an adult manner.



Matthew Whitney  
1003 Allen Street  
Springfield, MA 01118

December 11, 1985

Thank you for printing my LOC in #10, Cheree. I enjoyed the entire issue. The Dale Pollack interview was excellent (loved SKYWALKING). I also liked Sandi Jones' article of "Luke's Responsibilities". It was very comprehensive. One area where Sandi may draw criticism is that most of her suggested alternate actions are 180 degrees opposite of what Luke did. Some who feel Luke acted wrongly would not say he should have done the exact opposite, and would have alternates of their own to share. The spirit of the article is on target, though. Luke throughout the Saga must make decisions and choices based on what he feels to be right, and I feel he lived up to the title of hero.

I loved Maggie Nowakowska's review of IN A FAR-AWAY GALAXY. Of my SW related literature (novelizations, fanzines, etc.), it is one of my favorites and certainly the most insightful. Doris Robin's and Lee Vibber's character studies revitalized my perceptions of the characters. Like Maggie, I continually found new aspects of the characters and different interpretations of certain actions. It is a must read whether you end up agreeing with the authors or not. Gracia Fay Ellwood's essays were also very enlightening, though a tad too scholarly for me. She brought in references I'd never even remotely heard of, at times. It was well researched, though.

Lin S. Ward said something on males in fandom that rings true (at least on a personal level). We guys do get a lot of ridicule and little to no support for fannish interest. I was at GL's target age for SW in '77 (15), as were most of my friends. We are entering our mid-twenties now, and a gap exists inside the "old gang." Some of those guys I knew who were just as die-hard SW fans as I have totally forgotten the Saga or at best catch it only on cable or when I drag them to it. Some of the reasons are due to age; SW is looked on as something "kiddish" and they have "matured" since then. This has really created a rift with one old friend and a small nucleus of die-hards like myself. It is a shame, and I think it is typical of most guys. SW (or Trek or comics or whatever) was fine while they were in their teens, but there are many forms of peer pressure to act "manly" and not cling to the forms of entertainment you enjoyed when you were young. Peer pressure can also, I feel, be blamed for discouraging other related interests like writing, drawing, and collecting of memorabilia. The cliches about guys being put off by anything academic (like writing) are more real than not. Just ask any guy how long it has been since he's read a book. My father has read only one since high school --thirty years ago! (And that was on handicapping horse races.) Thank the Maker there are exceptions.

By the way, Tim, how's it feel to lose your monopoly and have to share the pages of SE with another guy?

Michelle Malkin: On "Vader's use or 'enjoyment' of torture." I think he does use torture, at times, for the enjoyment of it. His torturing of the rebel in ANH was (toward the end) purely that. It could not have been for information, for he had his hold so tight Antilles could not have talked if he wanted to. DV did get some info, but clearly not all the man knew. Also, I feel killing Ozzel was a mistake.

It is not entirely clear that Ozzel was incompetent. Granted that his positioning of the fleet at Hoth was unsuccessful, was it a blunder that warranted the death penalty? I think not. The man must have had some worth or he never would have risen to admiral's rank. The same applied to Captain Needa. What was Darth accomplishing by throwing away years of training and experience in a moment of pique? The obvious answer is an example to others; if so (and I do feel that was one of his intents), is it effective? Sure, it will inspire fear and dread and get those around him to jump at his every word, but in the long run, it is counter-productive. This form of discipline will set in a feeling of uselessness; a fear of being killed for even the slightest mistake. If that is the "reward" for your efforts, Imperial officers must live with a sense of doom which drags down their performance. The safest way to act would be to not take chances rather than to risk failure when gambling for higher than normal results ("I felt surprise was wiser").

I seem to have gotten a bit off-track in saying Vader enjoys torturing others, and instead asserted that his methods were inefficient. These ideas, however, go hand in hand. The underlying reason, I feel, for his clinging to these methods is that he does enjoy this power over others and abuses it (which seems to be a trait of darksiders). This inherent inefficiency of the Empire is a major factor in its downfall. (Note: I do not limit Vader's enjoyment of torture to Force-users. Other Imperials are probably just as guilty.)

I agree, Michelle, that Needa's death would serve no purpose, but I do feel the character died. The knee bend may be an involuntary reflex by the actor that no one noticed until it was too late to reshoot the scene.

Sandi Jones had a great idea that Ben might have been planning to tell Luke of his sister and father when they reached Alderaan (or at least just of Leia). Very plausible.

Carole Regine: No, you're not alone in the Universe in liking Palpatine's nerve when Luke and DV cross sabers. I am a BIG Ian McDiarmid fan. (How many remember him getting flame-broiled by Vermithrax in DRAGONSLAYER? I LOVE that film!!!) His performance in ROTJ was flawless. Cheree, on your note that he may have been Force-shielded and then had to draw from it to zap Luke--I loved the idea. This may have been the key to Luke's plan. He may have sensed it and known he could not get through it with an open attack. He then tossed down his saber and invited the Emperor to expend power on an offensive attack, hoping he could appeal to Anakin to rise up and get Palpatine while he was preoccupied.

Speaking of shielding, I just finished Katherine Kurtz' CAMBER OF CUILDI trilogy, and really noticed how analogous Deryni powers and the Force are. I'm not accusing either of being rip-offs because they have distinct differences as well, but just wanted to make mention of it.

On Leia leading a section of the Alliance: Leia has always struck me not as a leader of any rebel unit, but as an important staff (as opposed to "line") officer. In ANH, Dodonna appeared the key leader. Leia may have been the leader of the blockade runner, but also possibly only a passenger being escorted. She was, after all, still a senator with duties that probably demanded a lot of time in the public eye, precluding her from full-time duties with the Alliance. In TESB, she had dropped her public life, but it still appeared she was more on

Rieeken's staff than in charge of her own group. She did more consulting and passing on of orders, than making decisions. By ROTJ, her role does not seem to have changed, though with so many high muckamucks around, she appears to have been demoted. We are probably just seeing her in her actual place in the corporate ladder. (I agree with Jeannie Webster that more beings have joined the Alliance as they have won battles.)

I came across a quote while reading Carl Sagan's new book, CONTACT, that really applies to the "hidden dialogue" issue. "Humans are good...at discerning subtle patterns that are really there, but equally so at discerning them when they are altogether absent." (p. 54) I couldn't have put it better. The book, by the way, is fantastic.

Since Tim and others have been mentioning music favorites--any Elvis fans out there? I'm not talking about Costello, either (unless it is in a comedy with Bud Abbott). The King may be gone, but the music lives on!

Maggie Nowakowska: I like your feeling that Obi-Wan is honoring Anakin in his lie to Luke about his father being dead. That has always been my impression.

Sandra Necchi raised a good point on fan reaction to Han's "I know". Maybe little attention has been placed on how hard it was for Leia during that scene because most think of either Han or Luke first, at the expense of Leia. I am a Leia fan, myself, and have given more thought to Han's response to her statement. Another reason, though, is Leia's statement did not have the twists of meaning of Han's. I was not surprised to hear she loved Han at that point in the film. (I was surprised that the romance had developed, and spent a good two and a half years convinced it was a wrong move. I used to be another of those "hero gets the girl" thinkers--especially since I identify with Luke.) Han's response was a shocker, though, and it took time to sift through all its possible meanings.

Well, thanks again for allowing me the space, Cheree. Happy holidays, all.

## LAY OFF OUR PRESS

Tim Blaes  
Route 6, Box 294  
Hendersonville, NC 28739

December 28, 1985

Deneroff's transcription of the Dale Pollack interview should have been trimmed down. All of that "Hu-humm" and "Yeah. Yeah" as well as the constant interruptions could have been snipped out and the interview streamlined by a page or more. As for the content, it confirms what I've suspected. Lucas can't deal with most people, and he sure as hell can't deal with fandom/us. There are few

people harder to deal with than an introvert with power. Regarding the guest editorial by Hennig, Martz and Urhausen, that's how I've felt all along. It goes before and beyond the "Flap" of a few years back. The Official Fan Club exists to control the audience. Fandom, as we know it, is a portion of the audience that does not want to be controlled, can't be controlled, in fact, and that worries Lucas. Does anybody have a transcript of this panel? Video tape?

Linda Kerry: JEWEL OF THE NILE was okay. They couldn't exactly capture the feel of the first movie, not without doing a re-tread. It was a nice adventure movie, and I liked the characters (especially the Holy Man whose name was the title), but I don't think they took any risks and, as a result, it is not as good. And just as RTS's people/politics felt authentic, JOTN's does not; I'll bet Sandra Necchi rips it to shreds. But it's doing well enough to produce another sequel. I vote for Japan as the setting.

Michelle Malkin: Taking something over is less messy than destroying it and then rebuilding it again. And I'd just like to see Leia in charge.

Matt Whitney: Damn right, you can letch, and I admire your choice in women. Haven't seen THE MAN WITH ONE RED SHOE yet, darn it, but I'll probably rent it on tape sometimes. I did see UNDER THE RAINBOW twice, just for Carrie. If not for that incredibly stupid "it was all a dream" ending, that movie could have made more than it did. I hope to see Carrie in some sort of SF&F again, something radically different from SW.

Ronda Henderson: A half-truth is as good as a lie, and a lot of half-truths were slung around before, during and after the American Civil War. I think it was when I was in the seventh grade that my teacher brought in what was basically a Civil War role-playing game; the class room became Congress just days before Secession. Class was divided into four groups, Northern extremists and moderates and Southern extremists and moderates. I played a Southern extremist, a role I didn't feel comfortable with. But I was the only one who played their role effectively and the teacher said so at the end of the game. We avoided civil war, but I don't think the simulation was valid.

I have the highest praise for the ABC-TV miniseries, NORTH AND SOUTH. It presented some of the most complex characters I've seen in a Civil War epic. I can't wait for LOVE AND WAR.

Sandi Jones: Ooops! Boy, did I miss the obvious when I asked why Darth didn't slice the Emperor with his lightsaber. You and everyone else who pointed this out are sharper than I was. I suppose Darth could have used Luke's saber, but then he would have lost the element of surprise.

Brayton & LaVasseur: I had always imagined Leia as being the Rebellion's resident girl-genius who once saved the Alliance, not from Darth Vader or the Empire, but from bankruptcy. I can also imagine her as having done all she can in her position for the Rebellion, and wanting to do other things, such as save Han's frozen assets. But you can't go, we need you, you're a symbol, the Alliance leaders tell her. You'll live without me, she tells them, I'm going after my man.

Who wrote and published IF THE SOUTH HAD WON THE CIVIL WAR? Is it a recent publication?

Sally Syrjala: I seem to remember someone way back equating Luke, Leia and Han with Kirk, Spock and McCoy. I can see Luke as a Kirk of sorts, but Han and Leia seem to have parts of both Spock and

McCoy in them. (I think Carrie Fisher might be interesting as McCoy's daughter, Joanna. Or how about Mark, Harrison and Carrie as a Romulan, Klingon and Andorian, respectively?)

Bev Clark: Fannish blood will show. I knew one family whose house came close to looking like something out of BH&G, but when you have a small child who likes to leave toys about the house, and friends who drop by at odd times, it's hard to be too neat. A mundane might not notice, but all one had to do was look at their bookshelves, at their records, at the Freas print that they had on the wall, and you could tell they were fans. I really didn't see that much of the McFly house, and maybe I missed the Darth Vader alarm clock in their bedroom, but I still think their house looked too neat with no personality for it to be the home of a fan or a normal human, for that matter.

I thought HYPERSPACE was the first SW fanzine. Not many fans I know of remember it.

Mary Keever: Thank you very much for the Christmas card (I thank everybody who sent a card, in fact). I already have ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE DAGOBAH.

Marlene Karkoska: I suppose you could call me a generic monotheist with techno-mystic leanings. If droids could possess a "soul" then they would get it from the same source as we do. The "parents" of a robot could not make the soul anymore than the parents of a human.

Maggie's musical question: I think of Han when I hear a lot of Billy Joel's songs. I think he'd have fun doing the filk "You May Be Right, I May Be Scruffy, But I Just Might Be a Scoundrel That You're Looking For." I think of Luke and Leia when I hear QUEEN's "Sail Away, Sweet Sister" from their THE GAME album.

Carolyn Gollidge: I can understand why Vader let the shuttle pass to Endor, what I don't understand is why he then went to the Emperor to tell him they got through. Why didn't Darth just keep mum and deal with Luke purely on his own?

A "secular humanist" is someone who chews "Christian" dogma before swallowing it.

I submit yet another profound tabloid headline: "Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer Found in Meatlocker", right down on the bottom rack, where the kiddies can read it.

I find Cheree's explanation on why she censored my LoC in SE#9 both peculiar and unconvincing. For one thing, what she eventually did print was a little more...intense, by my remembrance. When I first typed it, it did look a bit strong, so I changed things around on the paper. Perhaps Cheree paid too much attention to what I marked out and not what I submitted for publication.

I received Cheree's letter two days before SE #10. That's not what I call discussing the matter. The tone of her letter seemed to be "I'm the editor and I can do what I please! If you don't like it, do your own letterzine!" If this were a regular fanzine, I would have no problem with this attitude. But this is a letterzine, and its function is communication. If you start filtering what goes in SE then its integrity has been breached. Perhaps SE should be mailed with a ribbon around it saying "sanitized for your protection."

There are two reasons I brought this up in SE. First, Joan Shumsky did not talk to me, let alone print those portions of my LoC. Censoring me is bad enough, but ignoring me at the same time is insulting. I would very much rather have dealt with this issue in SCOUNDREL, but Shumsky doesn't

have the courage to deal with her actions face-on. The other reason was that I was fed up with all the sideways comments on the matter. Before Sandra told me exactly who she was talking about, I thought it was another letterzine. I can understand why Sandra didn't mention names, but I think it's best to deal with each other directly and up front, whenever possible.

I am beginning to distrust the term "personal attack". It's starting to take on the air of jargon, of an all-purpose catch-phrase. It's used most often when someone doesn't like what is being said, or used clumsily where more exact words could be used. I've used the term before but now I'm swearing it off.

I was a bit inaccurate about ROCK & RULE. It was never distributed in the U.S. and was only given a few test screenings. The Powers That Be just decided that there was no market for the film. It almost makes me feel BUCKAROO BANZAI had it easy. Also, since my last LoC, I have learned that Nelvana has done some live-action work for cable TV, the only one coming to mind is a show called THE EDDISON TWINS.

I didn't notice a resemblance between Kirstie Alley and that woman in TWILIGHT ZONE, but I'll look closer at the rerun. Someone who I just recognized as resembling Kirstie is Mary Tamm, the first Romana. I just finished watching the DR. WHO episode, "The Androids of Tara", and they could be sisters. Kirstie and Mary even share similar facial expressions. (And Merry Loonlurk and Happy New Gerk to you, too.)

Sandra Necchi: I half-remember somebody on a PBS talkshow discussing what a Third World country is and he listed the criteria for what qualifies as a Third, Fourth and Fifth World country. I can't remember the difference between them, and I had, like most people, assumed that a Third World country was anyone who was not one of Us or Them. I can't list all the places from where we import our dope, but Central and South America is a prime supplier. So is North Carolina; marijuana may replace tobacco as this state's #1 cash crop. Please don't mistake my glib comments for ignorance; of course, there is more to Colombia than coffee and tourism. But I'm no expert on the country, either. Terri Black's friend knows more than I ever will.

Stereotypes and cliches usually have some part of truth to them, otherwise they would never have become stereotypes and cliches. I stand firm on the side of the American Indian, but I don't compulsively reject a movie with an Indian villain. Nor do I freak over movies with fat Southern sheriffs and their good ol' boy deputies, and that stereotype is close to home. What I don't know about, say, Colombia is small, compared to what most Colombians don't know about America. (A Colombian counterpart to RTS would probably be fascinating.) Many developing nations import American TV, and this is how they learn about us, from I LOVE LUCY, THE DUKES OF HAZZARD, THE UNTOUCHABLES, BONANZA and LAVERNE & SHIRLEY. I have no idea what they think of us from all that, but I doubt it's accurate.

Lay off of our press. They are among the finest in the world and the press of other nations don't even pretend objectivity. We run quotes from the Soviet news agency all the time on a variety of subjects. If PRAVDA quotes our news agencies, it's only to ridicule them. If we do something they don't like, we hear from them about it. It doesn't work the other way around. We may joke about our supermarket rags, but their counterparts in Britain

get away with things THE NATIONAL INQUIRER wouldn't even dream of trying. I remember this dork on THE TODAY SHOW, from that "Fairness in Media" group, I think, an organization so far Right that you need binoculars to see them. They were bitching about how "liberal" the news media was and they wanted to change all that. First they ran NBC's own newsbit about Andropov coming into power, then the dork ran the same tape but with the voice-over re-done to his satisfaction. The dork didn't even see it for the embarrassment it was; they even called Andropov a "dictator". Just because the American press doesn't present things the way you see them does not mean they are "duplicitous."

Harrison Ford wanted to lighten up an extremely heavy scene so he changed "You remember that, because I'll be back" to "I know." It's his fault. I think it distracts, but not detracts from Leia's new-found openness.

I'm still quite pleased with the new TWILIGHT ZONE, but some of the short segments are quite bleak, real downers. "The Beacon" comes to mind. I read in TZ magazine that Rod Serling had plans for his own TZ movie. It never came to be, of course, but they printed his story outline. If you want to talk about bleak, these were bleak! The stage was set for NIGHT GALLERY, I suppose.

I'm not sure the new TWILIGHT ZONE will retain the quality it had, now that Harlan left. Now, I'm no Harlan Ellison groupie, someone who thinks he can do no wrong. But I do respect him, bastard that he sometimes is. You could make some mighty strange wine from Harlan's sour grapes. I suspect that much of his dislike of STAR WARS stems from the financial failure of A BOY AND HIS DOG. I really can't place his dislike of BACK TO THE FUTURE. Probably just a bias against Spielberg. Ellison claims that BTTF is a rip-off of Heinlein's TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE, but there is more similarity between his segment for the new TZ, "One Life, Furnished in Early Poverty", and the old TZ episode "Walking Distance." But all this aside, Ellison quit TZ after a segment written and to be directed by him was axed. Program Practices Chief Allice Henderson wouldn't allow a story that dealt with both Christmas and racism. I don't give a flying buffalo chip about any "statement" he was going to make, and he can walk if he wants to, but I've seen his works in word and film and I trust Ellison's skill and talent. And I have never observed anything from "program practices" (or "broadcast standards" or whatever they choose to call the censors) that has led me to trust them.

Some of you out there may be interested in the Bloom County Fan Club of America. It's run by a SF fan and dealer I've met at conventions. It's not really and officially a fan club, like SW or ST's, and I think that makes it a little more sincere and honest. For more information, send a SASE to: P.O. Box 146, Warner Robins, GA 31099.

"The vision fades, a voice I hear, 'Listen to the Madman!!!' Ooo, but still I fear and still I dare not laugh at the Madman." QUEEN, The Prophet's Song. Hi\*Yo Silver, Away...



Carol Mularski  
1476-C King Ave.  
Columbus, OH 43212

January 2, 1986

I've been finding it very interesting to wade again in the pool of SW fandom through reading SE #9 and #10, after being "high and dry" for more than a year. I'd pretty much gafiated, partly because of all the Luke vs. Han nonsense after ROTJ came out that resulted in my acute allergy to SW letterzines, but mostly because of a radically altered life situation. I moved from Pittsburgh, my hometown, to Columbus; switched from being a Pitt support staff member to being an OSU academic; and tried out general SF/F fandom by becoming fairly active in the National Fantasy Fan Federation. However, I did keep up some contact with SW fandom through personal correspondence; and as I've now settled into my new life I've felt the urge to dip in once more, though I'll probably never again plunge in head first.

Now I feel strangely like both a neo and a long-time SW fan simultaneously, giving me a rather schizophrenic perspective on the conversations in SE. The neo in me is asking what the devil are you all talking about? The long-timer who's taken a vacation is marvelling--and excited--at all the new names in SE...so SW fandom is still growing!

Looking at the letters as a group, a few of them remind me of a line from a recent episode of my favorite TV series: "Not only isn't Armstrong playing with a full deck, he can't even find the cards!" (Efram Zimbalist Jr. to Pierce Brosnan, "Steele Searching Part 2," REMINGTON STEELE, MTM 1985). But most of the letters seem to reflect more balance and common sense than was apparent in SW fandom immediately post-ROTJ, and--thank goodness--a wonderful sense of humor. We mustn't take ourselves too seriously. After enjoying a few hearty chuckles from a lot of the letters in SE#10, I find my allergy to SW letterzines is in remission. And I do hope it's actually a complete cure.

Before I comment on some of the letters, I will mention for the record that I like ANH, TESB and ROTJ; Luke, Han and Leia all have my affection, as do Threepio, Artoo, Chewie, Lando, Ben, Yoda and Vader/Anakin; and I like George Lucas and appreciate his talents. End of pronouncement.

Marlene Karkoska: May I add my voice to the praise for your clear statement on the raison d'etre for the Great Luke Put-Down? My own correspondents and I have come up with that reasoning too, 'way back when it all started, but I, at least, never had the courage to state it quite so baldly (I ran away from it all instead--rafiated?). And it needed to be stated baldly. Congratulations.

About Ben telling Luke about his father (during ANH)--Ben had to tell Luke something because the kid asked him a simple question: "How did my father die?" Whenever I think about Ben's answer, I often change my mind about whether I feel he was in the wrong or not to say what he did. No matter what Obi-Wan said, there would have been both good and bad consequences. It was a judgment call on Kenobi's part, and before any of us condemn him for his decision, we should ask ourselves what we would have done in that situation. In fact, that would make an interesting article, one along the lines of Sandi Jones' excellent "Luke's Responsibilities." Each answer Kenobi could have given Luke could be systematically listed, along with what Luke's reac-



tion(s) to each one could have been and what the ramifications to each one could have been. There's the idea--anyone want to write the article? (I don't.)

One more thought--even if Ben was guilty of poor judgment, that does not make him a bad person or an incompetent Jedi. He himself admitted he was wrong to have taken Anakin as his apprentice instead of turning him over to Yoda. That's two mistakes we know of--one definitely major, one perhaps so. Yet he still died a Jedi of the Light. Likewise, we all make mistakes, some of them perhaps with very deleterious effects on others. These mistakes do not make us evil, though. Mistakes are different from sins (choosing evil). So we should show a little sympathy for Kenobi. He was in a tough situation.

However, I do tend to agree that it might have been better to tell Luke the truth during TESB. Ben (and Yoda) had plenty of time to think about all the consequences of the alternatives by then. Again, though, what would the consequences really have been if they did tell Luke the truth before he went to Bespin? How would have Luke reacted, and what would his reaction have meant for Han and Leia?

Matthew Whitney: Yes, I scratch my head about the Media vs. SF fandom rivalry, too. Any type of rivalry puzzles me--it's such a non-growth emotion. However, this one is quite real and one you're likely to run up against the longer you stay in either fandom--or both, for that matter. I was in the N3F's apa for a brief while, and in my first contribution mentioned that I'd written for ST and SW zines since 1976, although I planned to try my hand at writing material original with me from now on. One of the other apa members, a BNF well-known for his dislike of media fandom, congratulated me for "escaping" media fanzine writing, since it tends to "stunt a writer's growth". In my next apazine I wrote him a couple narrow-margined, single-spaced pages assuring him that, far from stunting my growth, media fanzines provide a place for new writers to learn their craft and get feedback, even if they're not ready to be professionals, and that I probably never would've known I could be a creative writer if not for media fandom (high school sure didn't do it for me). In the next mailing after that, he didn't answer even one word to all my verbiage, which led me to believe he didn't want to admit that media fandom might not be a vast wasteland after all--but couldn't come up with any valid counterarguments. He's that sort of person. And there are a lot more like him in SF fandom. I'm afraid there's little we can do about it.

I like your theory that Darth's the first Dark Lord to turn back to the Light Side--it matches up pretty well with what I've thought. And you've got to give Luke credit for not giving up in the face of Ben's and Yoda's pessimism.

Sandi Jones: I'd like to add my voice to yours encouraging people to try their hand at writing and/or artwork for zines. Even if one isn't planning to go pro someday, it never hurts to sharpen skills or uncover potential talents, and zines sure provide an interesting way to do it.

Hmm, in my opinion, Vader did know Luke was on Endor. One got the definite impression from both of them that they sensed each other when passing each other in orbit over the planet--and Vader let the rebels' stolen Imperial shuttle through even though he knew Luke was on it.

Barbara Brayton and P. J. LaVasseur: Is there some compelling reason why you two write your let-

ters together? I find it rather confusing. Perhaps I'm easily confused.

Reading Ann Worthington's comments on Mark Hamill's bodyguards, I'm reminded of something I've been curious about. What's Hamill been doing?--professionally, that is. And, for that matter, how about Carrie Fisher? See how out of touch I've been? I have a better idea about Harrison Ford--I saw WITNESS, of course (wonderful movie, that) and suspect he's preparing for the next Indiana Jones flick. Is he doing anything else? Since moving from Pittsburgh, I don't have Martynn around anymore to keep me up on his projects. Sigh. ((Ed's note: Mark has been doing quite a bit of Broadway, including the original run of AMADEUS, and the brief run of HARRIGAN N' HART. Carrie, after her aborted marriage to Paul Simon, has signed to play Emma Lazarus, the woman who wrote the poem about the Statue of Liberty--"give us your tired, your poor," etc.--in a movie set for next summer, to correspond with the centennial of the Lady. And Harrison, after taking 1985 off, has quite a line-up ahead of him. January, 1986, marks the filming of his next film, MOSQUITO COAST, in Belize. After that, he has signed to star in TWO JAKES, a sequel to CHINATOWN, taking a role originally designed for Jack Nicholson before he backed out. Then comes INDY III, as yet untitled, as far as I know. Word has it that a script has been finished, but Spielberg rejected it and it went back for a complete rewrite. INDY III should start filming in January or February, 1987.))

Sharon Saye: Another reason for the downtrend in zines is probably because the pace of life has become generally more hectic. As I mentioned before, one reason I've gone partially inactive is because my career has taken a major upswing and as a result has consumed much more of my time--the pursuit of tenure, and all that. I don't write anywhere near the number of letters I used to, LoCs or personal. Just call me Burgeoning Mundane. And I'm not the only one--I know of any number of the "Old Guard" who have had no choice but to go from FIAWOL to FIJAGH. And a fairly unimportant hobby, at that. But some of us still hang on to the old magic, as much as possible, anyway. Ideas for stories are certainly not the problem--one only has to read SE to see there are more than ever! ((Ed: Amen to that! Added to it all that none of us is getting any younger! Putting in eighteen hours days sure seemed a lot easier ten years ago!))

Well, I thought I'd be commenting more on all those lovely ideas, but I'm feeling burnt out right now. Out of practice writing LoCs, I guess. Maybe by next time I'll have worked myself up to my former verbosity. Am looking forward to SE#11!

## SOPHOMORIC APPROACH

Sally Syrjala  
PO Box 149  
Centerville, MA 02632

December 31, 1986

As the old year is rapidly waning, it seems only fitting that I allow the typer bells to usher in the new to the tune of a SE loc. For this time of year is spent in contemplation of "old acquaint-

tance" and SE's presence has become something which I regard as an old and dear friend.

One thing it was good to see in the past year was the fact Lucasfilm lost the court case they brought against the government for using the term "Star Wars". I wonder if this will have any effect on the suit-happy state of being at Lucasfilm. One also wonders at the grounds that empire used in the presentation of its suit. If different attitudes could have been expressed, would the results have been different? If it had been stated that the term "Star Wars" had been used in conjunction with a basically "anti-technological" tale and that the useage of the term in association with a technological weapons system cast a shadow on the integrity of the product, could the outcome have been less cut and dried?

Lucasfilm took the sophomoric approach of saying that someone else had entered into the same playground and had run with the community ball. It was assumed that because Lucasfilm had had a long and successful run with that ball, that it was theirs forever more and none else could ever lay hands upon it. One can understand the decision saying the words "star" and "wars" had been around for a long time before the film and that the trademark had a limited application.

However, if Lucasfilm had used the other approach, would it not have also made the Star Wars weaponry system seem as if it could have been toppled like one of the Empire's Walkers by means of "stone age" devices? This very linkage could have been enough to put a stop to the association of the name with the system and would have made Lucasfilm look less childish in their egotistical attempt to keep the play strictly in their home court. Too, if it is true that Lucas has implied that SW was a film which showed how humanity would triumph over technology, I have often wondered why he never voiced a word in objection based on this "misuse" of the terminology in reference to a weapons system.

From this area of confused meaning, one can travel to the thoughts I have been having about Darth Vader and the possibility of his being a double agent. Vader could be looked on as having "two faces". One resides behind the mask which he always wears when in the service of the Empire. It is when this tour is done that the mask is removed and his "true" face revealed.

In SW:ANH, Vader argues for keeping Leia alive. It is not he who gives the order for her execution or that of her planet. Rather, he gives reasons why it would be beneficial to keep her alive.

In TESB, it is Vader who once more speaks up for one of our rebellious heroes. He convinces the Emperor that Luke would make a better live ally than a dead enemy.

Too, it is Vader who accomplishes the primary task of putting an end to the reign of the Emperor by tossing him into the chasm and in effect doing what the whole Rebel fleet had been trying to do.

The SW saga is nothing but a series of surprise relationships. It could be that Vader's role in the Empire could be but one more of these. Maybe he was assigned the task of infiltrating to the "highest" circles so that information could be gained.

Another question would be as to the carbon freezing of Han. What would have happened to Han had not Vader "saved" him in such a manner? And why was Han brought to Jabba's place? Was this basically a dry run for the assault on the Death Star and the Emperor?

If there is anything you can say about SW, it

is that it is always offering new ways of seeing what it has presented before us. Here is yet another "maybe" to consider and to become fodder for yet more fan fiction from a different point of view!

The subject of the legitimacy of the Imperial government has been brought up in these pages before. This presents yet another interesting area for contemplation. For the Emperor had put an ending to representative forms of government when he abolished the Imperial Senate. Leia was a member of that body. However, it seems she could not speak against the government and not be considered a traitor.

This brings to mind the Declaration of Independence which our country has used in its break from a government which would not recognize our right to govern ourselves. "When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, convinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to toss off such government."

Based on this, it would seem the SW saga could also be an analogy to our own Revolutionary War. Could not the planets be looked on as colonies across the sea of space? It seems they were under rule of "foreign" troops and that they were not given powers of self-government equal to those on the "mother" planet.

Again taken in this light, one wonders if Hoth could not have been the Valley Forge of the SW rebellion? I suppose this would make space the Poto-mac and one can carry that fantasy vision a step further and see the Falcon as the quarter being skimmed across its waters.

Lin S. Ward: "The Force is strong in him." Could this not mean that the reservoir of potential was great? However, it is a raw material. To be used, it must be refined. Just as the tides have great power, but they need channelling before they can form a tide mill to generate power. Yes, Leia could well be the symbolization of the "head." The head-strong determination whereas Luke is the "heart". The emotion, the impulsiveness. Han would then take the place of the "hand"--the skill needed to fly the freighter--the seasoned veteran of former fights to whom one could turn for skill along that line.

Michelle Malkin: I tend to "see" media fandom as more creative--more artistic--than SF fandom. Too, SF fandom seems to be more "organized" to my way of seeing. There are more "clubs" and the cons seem to be more oriented to the making of money than do cons such as MediaWest which is a fan's con. I am fond of both fandoms, but I do consider media fandom to be my first fandom and my primary home. Is not jealousy and insecurity the usual basis of most disputes and animosities? If a fandom is "different", it does not mean it is worse or less worthy, only that it is different. I enjoy different fandoms. They help to make a many faceted reflection with prism lights dancing in front of the mind's eye. It would be nice if each would honor the other. Communication between the two is one way to start this process. This way each can learn there are "good" people within each branch of the tree.

Sandra H. Necchi: It is good to see you back within these pages once more. You always present an interesting letter/point of view. I agree with you on your opinions on TOD. Racism existed. To not include it in the films would have been to deny its existence. Would that have been better or worse? Things are as they are. History cannot be

changed except by totalitarian governments. I do agree that in the "period" film you cannot deny the conditions which existed at that time. Too, TOD was supposed to be a recreation of the Saturday afternoon adventure series. In this adaptation, it did a superb job. By the way, have you seen SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM? It is being shown as YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES. However, the scenes in the major action sequences of that film are a remarkable mirror image of TOD. It gave me a strange sense of having seen the film in another incarnation!

Enough wordage for this time. May SE prove to be a stimulating source of ideas and discussion in this coming year as it was in the past. For now ...PEACE.

## THREE CHEERS FOR LUKE!

Vonnie Fleming  
67 Margot St.  
Chadstone 3148  
Victoria, Australia

There's nothing quite like another thought-provoking issue of SE to read over the festive season. Some very interesting articles as well as LoC's this ish; plenty of material to inspire feedback, only problem is where to start? I'll attempt to be methodical: begin at the beginning and work my way through.

Sandra Necchi: You're to be congratulated! "Race Relations in the SW Universe" made for fascinating reading, full of astute observations and challenging ideas. One thing that stood out to me was your deep understanding of how humans and aliens relate/react to each other. All arguments were clearly expressed and backed up by examples and a powerful train of logic. Regarding your belief that "the droids in SW have developed into something beyond programmed computers", my question is how did this come about? Was it because their human creators programmed them to be so, or did the droids themselves develop to this state of their own accord without human intervention? I gather you're inclined to favor the latter theory. A "thinking" computer is no longer a fantasy, even in our world, but I don't understand how a droid or machine could develop emotions, feelings, etc., on their own initiative. ((Ed's note: Heinlein poses the question in his new book, THE CAT WHO WALKS THROUGH WALLS, and gives a logical explanation--that somewhere along the way, a computer has as many "connections" as the human brain and slowly becomes self-aware. To back this up, he asks the question: Exactly when does a human baby become self-aware? You're aware now, but can you pinpoint the exact time it happened?)) If they have, then there will eventually be problems caused by the social mainstream's ignorance of droids' elevated state, maybe a similar situation a la BLADERUNNER will arise. Personally, I don't see anything wrong in "exploiting" (but not mistreating) droids, probably because I don't share your belief that they may "develop into much more than they already are". They are different from the mechanicals we are used to, but I still believe their "initiative, creativity and human emotion"

are the result of human creators rather than droids' own "personal" development. The idea, however, is an intriguing one and well thought-out. I have read your story in SITH YEARBOOK (title "The Ideology of Balance", for interested parties) and I highly recommend it. You've captured Piett's character perfectly. I enjoyed your handling of the theme you brought up in your letter--the "lily-white image of the Alliance" and the maladies of the old Republic. Leia's questioning of her own ideals was a skillful and realistic piece of writing and I loved the "twisty" ending. A most commendable effort--please write some more! To me, the key question in "Ideology" was "Could any sensitive person argue for the Empire" and I think you answered it very well. Well done.

Sandi Jones: Three cheers for Luke! (Rah, rah, rah!) A very comprehensive critique of the subject. A fine step-by-step analysis of Luke's actions (and alternatives). You're absolutely right about Luke's being true to himself--that, for whatever other faults he may possess, is his salvation. If you can't honestly be yourself, then what can you be? There may have been other alternatives that may have been equally right for someone else in the same set of given circumstances, but not for Luke. You said it very well, Sandi--take a bow! Your analogy of the Force/Fire sounds similar to my own concepts. Agree with you re the equilibrium being out of balance = trouble--maybe this was Darth's problem. Gee, you've got some interesting story ideas! One might hate to think of Luke meeting his father earlier in his life, but what a fantastic piece of writing it could be! Thought your answer to what caused Luke's dramatic change from TESB to ROTJ was a very good one. Concerning Yoda's gruff manner with Luke, I also found this aspect irritating, maybe it's part of his character or perhaps a deliberate method of testing Luke's patience, therefore part of his training--Yoda states very early in the piece that Luke is "reckless." Perhaps this was one way for Luke to "learn patience," in Ben's words (and he should know because he, by his own admission, was inclined to recklessness and he obviously benefitted from Yoda's teaching, as in ANH he displayed great patience!). After all, Luke would have to be patient to put up with our sentient fungus. Who knows, maybe it was just old age catching up with our favorite mushroom.

Michelle Malkin: I think Anakin was a full Jedi before he fell. In TESB, Yoda warned Luke that only a fully trained Jedi would defeat Vader and the Emperor. Well, Vader conquered himself (even though he told Luke it was "too late" for him) and got rid of Brainburn (I love that expression!); in this light, I doubt he'd be able to accomplish either of these tasks if he hadn't already had full training. Even a full Jedi wouldn't necessarily be immune to temptation. As for "snobs" who can "sit on their high horses until their fannies turn blue"--that's a good one! Original, too.

Matthew Whitney: I too was saddened by Piett's demise and which is why I enjoy Piett-survives stories. Incidentally, I enjoyed your "Aftermath on Bespin" which Carolyn Gollidge forwarded to me--keep writing!

Ronda Henderson: I don't know that Darth would wish to die (although his destruction of Palpatine left him mortally wounded, so he didn't have much choice), but you're right about the Alliance giving him a hard time if he'd survived. He had caused them so much suffering for years and that is what they'd remember. Also, Luke developed a bond with

him that is because he was his son. Notice in TESB after Luke's rescue how a link (mindlink?) is established between Luke and Vader--this is only immediately after Luke is told he is Vader's son. And the mutual awareness between father and son when the shuttle team attempts to penetrate Endor. This bond between them is what enabled Luke to be able to "see" the "good" in his father, in my opinion. (Whether the link/bond would have formed if Luke had remained in ignorance of the fact Vader was his father is open to debate.) But Luke had a reason for trying to turn his father back to the good side--the Alliance at large would not. Nor would they have the benefit of this rapport that gave Luke the insight to know that Vader wasn't beyond redemption. They might have him to thank for Palpatine's death, but (1) would they know this? Would they even believe it, if told? and (2) if they knew, would this one act balance against all that Vader had done against them over a period of years (in their eyes)? Luke owed Vader his life, but Vader owed the Alliance thousands of lives--the lives of those he'd killed or caused to be killed in the Empire's name. Many would simply never forgive him. I share your feelings--I cried buckets of tears over Darth's demise!

Barbara Brayton: JEDI wasn't all fun for Han, either. As Carolyn Golledge pointed out, he was nearly cooked alive by the cute, cuddly Ewoks! As he got snap-frozen in ESB, I surmise Uncle George decided to almost roast him, for a change. Life ain't easy for the poor Corellian scoundrel.

Sally Syrjala: If you keep finding haikus like that, I'll have to read SE with a big box of tissues beside me! It was beautiful and very relevant.

Bev Clark: You're right about the future being "of such a nature that it cannot be seen precisely". Yoda said, "Always in motion (my emphasis) is the future." I take that to mean that the future is not one concrete, predetermined, unchangeable inevitability, but a series of possibilities, and what comes to pass depends on the action one decides upon. Ben reminds Luke not even Yoda can foresee his friends' fates. No one is infallible with the use of the Force and precognition is no exception. Agree with you about the element of coercion and incest--coercion is the real issue, I feel. But as you rightly observed, it isn't an issue in Lucas' SW. I have read stories where fan writers have developed it as an issue in their own SW stories; all pieces were well-written and compelling, but incest is irrelevant in Lucas' trilogy.

Carole Regine: You've got some great ideas. The one about how the Jedi originally evolved was nothing short of brilliant.

Marlene Karkoska: See my answer to Sandi Jones re Yoda's treatment of Luke. It might have been to test Luke's patience, although the little green guy annoyed me, too--which shows the extent of my patience!

Terri Black: GL's one character he later split into two. This could also be applied to Anakin/Darth as well as Luke/Leia. Perhaps this accounts (partially) for Marcia Brin's belief that AS/DV are two separate individuals. Right--why make Han part of the big happy family? Leia wouldn't be able to have either him or Luke then!

Carolyn Golledge: Hi, there! In answer to question 2, firstly Vader thrived on taking risks, e.g., Tarkin remarks (in ANH) that Vader is "taking an awful risk" in letting the Falcon go to lead them to the rebel base. Secondly, as his son (who was capable, to Vader's belief, of destroying the

Emperor) was on the shuttle, Vader would hardly want some ambitious officer blowing it--and Luke--into a million pieces.

Question 4--you have a point. As a true Imperial, I think there should be a declared "open season" on Ewoks all year round--Susan Henderson, let me know the date of the next Ewok Shoot! (I'll even have an open house for an Ewok barbecue afterwards--and I mustn't forget to invite Han--"Revenge of the Corellian", would make a great cartoon.) Agree that Luke keeping 3PO in ignorance was a form of protection; the voice of commonsense, at last. One must beware of seeing evil intent behind Luke's EVERY action, although we all have a right to see things differently. Like your idea of Solo's destiny being to keep Leia out of danger of allowing the Dark to take control of her. Re Palpatine finding Vader an easier target for conversion because of his reliance on cybernetics, it would depend on whether Vader surrendered to the Dark before or after his fateful encounter with Ben. I always thought that the fight took place because Vader had already made his decision in favor of the Dark--Ben tells Luke that he tried to turn him back to the "good" side and they fought, presumably because Vader was unrepentant. He also stated (at least in the novelization) that the Emperor sensed Anakin's power and "lured" him to the Dark Side. To me, that doesn't sound like coercion, although if Vader showed any inclination towards the Dark, or hadn't definitely decided, then it would be easier for Brainburn to convince him after the accident and sway him in favor of the Dark. It would also be easier for him to control Vader, keeping him in his power forcibly if Vader showed any sign of repentance or wishing to reverse his allegiance with his "Master." Luke certainly was in agony and, after carefully watching the scene in question, it does seem to be his artificial hand that's giving him the most trouble, or so it seems to me. As Vader relied so much more on cybernetics, this would explain why Luke survived the Emperor's attack and Vader didn't. Hope this rambling is of some assistance to you.

Jeannie Webster: I don't think Vader knew the identity of Luke's twin sister, either. Obviously, Luke wasn't prepared to take the chance that he didn't--he was sufficiently desperate to attack Vader in the belief that it was necessary to protect Leia. Although Vader speaks very convincingly, giving the impression he does know, it could well have been bluff on his part, a brainwave to turn Luke to the Dark--and one that backfired on him. Also, just before Vader dies, his words to Luke are, "Tell your sister you were right" -- not "tell Leia". At that point, I think he may have been more positive in his statement if he conclusively knew Leia was beyond harm by then.

Barbara Tennison: Yoda remarks to Luke that his father was a "powerful Jedi"; during Luke's training that he says that the Dark will consume him "as it did Obi-Wan's apprentice", obviously meaning Vader. Even at this stage, it would seem unlikely that Yoda didn't know Vader's former identity.

Tim Blaes: You hit the nail on the head as far as I'm concerned. "George isn't really concerned with a realistic political world," etc. Exactly! Apart from the friendship between Luke, Leia and Han, the main theme seems to be one of good vs. evil. A pity that we only got relative glimpses of the good people in the Empire's ranks (e.g., Piett) and men of substance (Veers, the professional sol-

dier who is dedicated and efficient), while the Imperials were largely portrayed as one dimensional cardboard villains. You raised a good question--if the Imperials were all as evil as George would have us believe, the Rebels would have defeated them long ago. How much control the Emperor had politically is debatable; he may be the top man, its core and his evil influences others beneath him, but he seems too wrapped up in himself and enhancing his Force power to be bothered with actively running a government. Your explanation of Luke's survival instinct surfacing, coupled with his Jedi training to trust his feelings and act on instinct, etc., thus reaching out to Vader was great, well put, too. Also the explanation of Vader's response at that time. If you ever change your mind about writing your "psychotic" Mary Sue epic, I'd be among the first to want to read it! (I love your crazy ideas and your sense of humor!) You should make a film of it. And Darth as a collector--I had to laugh. Can just imagine him saying to some lucky lady, "Would you care to come back to the Star Destroyer and see my lightsaber collection?" What a great excuse to get him alone! Hope ol' Brainburn wouldn't turn up unexpectedly.

Sharon Saye: I was unaware that Pat Molitor had written such a series. If anyone can tell me the names of the zines they appeared in, I'd love to read 'em! As long as Pat can put up with endless pages of my waffling commentary, I'll be glad to supply feedback, but I gotta read them before I can make any valid remarks.

Jeanine Hennig: Your idea of the storyline where Luke is discriminated against because of his hand makes an interesting parallel with Sandra Necchi's view that "droids are the one link that binds all sides of the issue of racial prejudice." What if this prejudice is extended to cyborgs (i.e., people who have artificial prostheses, or rely on life-supporting machinery)? Vader would have very little time for this bias! He might well introduce laws making it an offense, a breach of cyborgs' civil rights. This idea could go on forever, the possibilities are endless! If we could all only get them typed up coherently and finished! The "melding...of Light and Darkness" etc., sounds similar to what I was trying to express last letter.

Sally Smith: Like your antennae--LOVE your license plates (now all I need is my personal license plates...TIE EDU!).

There have been so many outstanding letters full of brilliant ideas that unfortunately I can't possibly address all of them. So many, in fact, I almost forgot to make a comment on the "Question Authority" article by Jeanine Hennig, Samia Martz and Mary Urhausen. I read it with interest and a little sadness. It appears that Lucasfilm's representatives are somewhat devoid of the human spirit that characterizes the SW saga and captured the hearts of fans worldwide. A pity George doesn't exert some of the control he seems fond of maintaining upon his company representatives. After all, he is the man who wrote Leia's immortal words, "The more you tighten your grip, the more star systems will slip through your fingers." Someone should perhaps explain to Lucasfilm that the same holds true for fans as well as star systems, and the condescending attitude toward fanzines and those responsible for keeping them alive plus dire warnings of lawsuits does nothing to endear to it those who made the saga such a success--indeed, the saga is bigger than the man who created it, in the sense that Lucasfilm no longer has much rigid control

over it as it would like! And maybe that's putting my finger right on the sore spot...

I was happy though to see the amount of material about the good points of the Empire and acknowledgement of the existence of good people in it, not to mention some kind words regarding the Man in Black himself. Michelle Malkin expressed a theory that's been close to my heart for sometime, i.e., that Vader didn't kill Needa, and we had Mary Keever declaring her love for Darth. With representation by Susan Henderson, Ronda Henderson (and yours truly), the Empire's been getting quite a plug recently. This is good--especially as Darth isn't around to defend himself now, and relies on people like us to stand up for him. Should have a really, something like "Vader Fen of the Galaxy Unite!" or a "Support Your Local Sithlord/Stormtrooper/Whatever". There seems to be a lot more fun and friendliness in SE generally, and that's what we need. I think Cheree deserves a big hand for providing us with such an open forum; the same goes for all the contributors for their varied and intriguing ideas.

Cheree, I've just realized how long this is--I apologize if I've given you typist's cramp. Anyway, I'll shut up (at last) before this letter becomes a novel.

## ONLY DARK SIDE JEDI?

Kerri Smithline  
5001 - 14th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11219

January 6, 1986

Was DV the only Darkside Jedi? Perhaps this was what the Clone Wars was all about, or at least what started it. Palpatine began cloning Jedi in his own Dark image to conduct secret meetings (a la KKK) of Lightside Jedi, slowly beginning their seduction to the Dark. Palpatine took his time. He knew that eventually he would win. He obviously wasn't counting on "the future always in motion." Luke and Leia's mother feared that Darth (her husband?) would offer their children as disciples and fled to Alderaan and its considerable haven with the children. It was Kenobi, who after harangue and promises, finally cajoled the mother into allowing him to spirit away her son to Tatooine (the planet farthest from the bright center of the universe, remember?) and out of reach, for now, of the Emperor and Anakin/Darth.

Lin Ward: How could Luke forget something he probably never knew he had? Also, at what age was he given to Owen and Beru? Is it possible for another experienced Jedi to absorb the Force of a young child in an emergence so they cannot give themselves away? Remember baby Tabitha in BEWITCHED? When she wanted a toy, she called it. She was only doing what came "naturally" to her.

Carolyn Gollledge: I don't recall the shuttle being disguised. Or Vader knowing that there was a sabotage team on board it at all. As far as your number 4 goes, I never thought of it that way. Just

the thought of Han getting his fire lit is enough for me. Was Han's trying to blow out the fire, Freudian? If Dagobah is like Brigadoon, was it visible only to Luke, who like Tommy needed very much to have it exist?

Sally Smith: Whoever said that the rebellion was over? Just because a battle was won and the "Emperor" destroyed? Could've been a clone of the Emperor, or even an android, which is why Vader threw it down the shaft. May have been the only way to kill it. And why should the Emperor expose himself to risk? This way he's safe at "home", while the clone or android is destroyed. ((Ed: A suggestion that's been made before is that maybe it really was the Emperor, but only his corporeal self has been destroyed. Maybe he's gone to the Dark Side of the Force, just as Ben and Yoda went to the Light Side...in which case, he's bound to turn up again, in a much harder to kill form!))

Jenni Hennig: Do you have to be a Jedi to be able to construct a lightsaber, or can anybody with the technical know-how do it? Also, who instructed Luke on how to build one, or was it "natural" for him to know. (See next paragraph.)

Marlene Karkoska: An easy answer to Luke's being able to do things that he was never taught-- Jedi Genetic Memory. Or is that answer too easy?

Sandi Jones: Vader could have been the clone and Anakin the original, the clone remembering the original's memories at the point of death. Thereby, we let Ben off the old hook. He didn't lie. As far as he and/or anyone else knew, Anakin was indeed destroyed by his clone, after which Ben stepped in and tried to destroy the triumphant clone by throwing it into the volcano. (At least according to LFL.)

Matthew Whitney: Your answer to Marcia Brin was interesting and maybe even caused the Clone Wars as well, e.g., what is a clone? Does it have a soul? An "it" or a "who"?, etc.

Michelle Malkin: Vader having an off-day, huh? Gee, I wonder what his "on" days are like?

Nobody has yet mentioned Harrison Ford's state of health while ROTJ was being filmed. Mighod, the man was just out of a wheelchair on account of a very bad back. Come on, give the guy the benefit of the doubt. A bad back can ruin your whole day, not to mention an entire performance.

I wonder if Buddy Hart still looks like Harrison Ford. (Has Buddy Hart turned into Corey Hart somewhere along the way?)

How about a cryogenic unit that the Emperor uses to stay alive? We don't know how old he is, and the first we see of him is TESB. He just came out of the freezer after a one or two year sleep, or maybe even twenty, or fifty(!), leaving either his clones and/or Tarkin to hold the reigns of government. Hey, here's one, the Tarkin that blew up was one of the Emperor's clones? Hmmm... And the reason the Emperor looks like that is a combination of his own evil vibes, and cryogenic reaction. After all, he's been going into the deep freeze for God only knows how long. Jeez, I hope that makes sense to someone!

I see Bepin as a sort of PSAT, Endor as an SAT and, since Luke passed both with flying colors, he is now ready for college. That's college, not grad school--in other words, he is still a student Jedi, not a master, and altogether not a founder of a new order. Not yet!

I'm just wondering what Luke told Han about DV being his father, and how Han took it. After all, the man responsible for all his and Han's suffer-

ing, personal and otherwise is being given a hero's pyre...

What would have happened, had Luke gone to the Academy the year before, as he wanted to? Would he still have gotten involved in the rebellion? Would DV have found him that much faster? Could he, with-out Ben's introduction and early tutelage with the Force, still fulfill his "destiny"?

Artificial insemination? Could there have been a sperm bank to which the male Jedi contributed? Maybe that's why Vader wasn't aware of Leia being his daughter. So they still could have been brother and sister; their mother being inseminated with Anakin Skywalker's sperm twice at different times. Maybe years apart. That would explain the age difference between brother and sister. Also, their mother could very well have been Bail Organa's wife!

Later on, Vader found out through records that he was Luke's biological father. Leia's records being not all that obvious, or else Leia had a different father. Another question--is it possible to implant with 2 different sperm at the same time?

Has anyone ever run a SW/D&D game assigning attributes to all, and still have the good guys win?

Instead of complaining about why there isn't any NPR/ROTJ, let's do something about it! How about we the fans doing a tape right out of the ROTJ screenplay book, if enough of us can get together in the same place at the same time? How 'bout a con? Charge nothing, but a good, clean tape like Martie Benedict used to do. If ROTJ isn't feasible, a fan story then. Can't you just hear that "blooper reel" now?

Force be with ya!

## STILL DIGNIFIED

Sally Smith  
38725 Lexington St. #247  
Fremont, CA 94536

January 13, 1986

Hello, again--lookit, I didn't wait till the last minute to write!

"Luke's Responsibilities": An excellent article that shows how Luke dealt with his choices in an appropriate manner. I hope the anti-Luke faction will try to read this with an open mind and maybe some of it will sink in.

Re the interview: KRON, "the only station GL could get in Modesto", did a six-part series in November called "Lucas: An Unauthorized Biography". They couldn't get GL's cooperation, so they interviewed Pollack, friends of GL's from high school, a USC film prof, one of George's neighbors, etc. We got to see such exciting things as the outside of the ILM building, GL's house from about a quarter-mile away (with a telephoto lens) and Skywalker Ranch from their helicopter. Nothing I couldn't do myself. Local fen found it amusing how little they got. Which leads me to:

"Question Authority": The more I think about it, the more I agree. I used to get all sorts of cooperation from LFL, but haven't gotten diddly

since about May, not even the usual Christmas card. I think LFL had better clean up its act. They could take a lesson from Stephen J. Cannell Productions. They're always nice to fen, from the secretaries, to the film crews, to the producers, right up to Cannell himself, who's one of the nicest people I've ever met.

Onto the letters--

Mickey: Loved your descriptions of how Luke, Han and Leia have grown throughout the saga. In retrospect, one thing I think that accounts for my love of SW is that (showing my lack of age here) the first time I saw ANH, I was 15 and thinking vaguely about the future. I saw TESB at 18, right before I went to college (somewhat like Luke's starting his training, if you will), and by the time I saw ROTJ, I'd been married for two years. While it's hardly comparable to a galactic war and the fight between good and evil, it does get one to mature a bit. So, in a way, I feel I've grown up with Luke. Though I refuse to "grow up" in the mundane sense!

And, although I think Han's got more brains than a wombat and isn't as greedy as he was portrayed in earlier fanfic, I still think he's got a high sex drive and could drink anybody under the table. I say this as a compliment, mind you (hey, I'm a BIG Luke fan, but if SoLo shows up at the door, I won't turn him away).

Chris Callahan: How 'bout "Indiana Horowitz and the Temple Beth Shalom", along with "The Ten Lost Tribbles of Israel"? Re BLADERUNNER, if you ask me, the movie ends when the elevator doors close. That's how I saw it at the first sneak and I HATE that damn happy ending (and the fact that they cut some of Ford's best acting and one scene where he was shirtless). The burning question now isn't whether Deckard is a replicant, but whether Lt. Castillo of MIAMI VICE is!

Matthew: Welcome! How's your pancreas? (Just kidding!) I heartily and totally agree with your comments regarding the "hidden dialogue".

Ronda: I laughed hysterically at your alternate meanings for BNF. Sorry I couldn't use your art, hope you found it another home.

Sandi: I agree, to each his or her own regarding what they enjoy in films. And who says one has to only like a certain type of movie? Me, I have both CITIZEN KANE and SW on tape. If I like it, I don't care if it's "meaningful" or "lesser." ((Ed: Ain't that the truth? My tape collection includes such diverse things as GHANDI, EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS, GONE WITH THE WIND, MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL, SINGIN' IN THE RAIN, TRUE GRIT, SOME LIKE IT HOT, and so on. I've got westerns, musicals, science fiction, classics, romances, TV series, National Geographic specials, you name it! Some of them are gems of filmmaking, some are pure crud, but, if I enjoy a movie or show, it may very well find its way into my collection.))

Sally: Lovely haiku. Perfect.

Annie (and Cheree): I'm thinking of having my antennae removed, else I'll have to cut holes in my fedora. But Jenni's suggested I take up antennae quivering, so who knows...

Mary Keever: Thanks for the copies. I read a tabloid article about a year ago, "Woman Terrorized by Cabbage Patch Kid Possessed by Devil."

Tim: What's with the ectoplasm in your picture? Who ya gonna call...? Thanks for calling me about your ex-zine. ((Ed: Actually, Tim explained when he sent the photo that his cat had gone on a seek-and-destroy mission after this particular shot,

which Tim had had taken specially for SE.))

Jenni: Thanx for the Luke porn! Pant pant drool drool...

Maggie: For Jedi songs, try two of England Dan and John Ford Coley's: "Children of the Half-Light" and "Love is the Answer" (both from DR. HECKLE AND MR. JIVE). And, isn't that HF and His Amazing Bull-whip on "Last Mango in Paris" by Jimmy Buffet?

Cheree: A much better title for my letter and an Ewok illo beats Jabba any day.

If anybody cares, I liked JEWEL OF THE NILE, even if it was more of a ROTLA ripoff than RTS.

That's all for this time--I've got a zine to get out before you read this. May the Force be with us all!

And, if Spielberg and Ford don't get Oscars, I'm gonna throw a fit!

## INTERESTING IDEAS

Lin S. Ward  
1703 Heritage Hill Drive  
Richmond, VA 23233

I'm running out of superlatives for SE! Each issue requires more time for reading, enjoying, and synthesizing, and I anticipate each new issue with ever-growing enthusiasm!

I'm so glad some people asked about Starstone because I misspelled the name--it's STARTONE (makes more sense, too). The address is Startone Recordings, PO Box 363, Brooklyn, NY 11229-0363, and the tapes are excellent. One word of warning, however, the tapes are mailed in unpadded manilla envelopes, so you may wish to invest in the plastic covers as well as the tapes. I'm so sorry that we're not likely to get a ROTJ radio show. Six or seven hours of scripts could have filled in many of our favorite Most Reprehensible Gaps in the characterization, etc. \*sigh\* (Gee, do ya think we could write our own?)

Sandra Necchi brings up lots of interesting ideas in both her article and her letter. I was bowled over by the analysis of the Sandpeople's probably plight. I confess I'd never given it a thought. However, I did worry about what would happen to Endor if the Alliance decided to stay (shudder). The fantasy of an Endor idyll may bewitch me, but the vision of a couple of armies encroaching on a primitive society nestled in an unspoiled world, ruins the dream.

Your Clone Wars theory is excellent--yes, our pocketbooks are what raise most hackles, the bigotry is just the red flag that brings it to the surface. Following that line of thought, if the Stormtroopers are clones, then I think they'd be in big trouble after the Empire's defeat, because none of these problems would have been resolved under the Empire. Or, if they had, it was probably in some dictatorial fashion that people would now reject. I wonder if the clones were made Stormtroopers to get them out of the job market, a campaign promise from the ol' Senator? Nasty, ugh. (And so's your worm idea, Cheree; it implies Sarlacc pits all over Tatooine. Can you see the headlines: "Latest Mos Eisley Sinkhole Found to be Sarlacc--Evacuation Efforts Unsuccessful".)

Your comments about how "real revolutions" are run brought me down to Earth; I'd never seen the Rebellion in that light, but it all fits. It even makes sense that Leia might have been demoted. I can visualize a scene where a couple of generals explain that they, er, need her desperately on diplomatic assignments, and can't afford to, ah, risk her safety in the control center. I think it would depend on her remaining power base, popularity, and perhaps, financial resources?

Thanks so much to everyone who responded to my question of why Ben trained Vader. Everyone seems to agree that ol' Ben must've been a pretty arrogant and prideful fellow before Vader's Fall. I appreciated Carolyn Gollidge's suggestion that Ben took on Vader's training as a matter of expediency. It's evident that there are dicey moments in every Jedi's training, and trying to train an older, powerful, passionate Force-user in the midst of a war would be a dangerous situation. (Echoed in the current trilogy; a terrific dramatic device if the first trilogy showed the same struggle, with a different ending, of course). Barb Brayton and Carole Regine wonder if Yoda knew Ben took on Vader, and Barbara Tennison suggested that Yoda may never have known that Anakin and Vader were one and the same--WOW--some great story ideas here!

Sharon Saye and Pat Nussman have both addressed problems with SW zines, slowing production, practically no feedback, etc. I, too, was distressed by Pat Molitor's letter in SHADOWSTAR 18, and further concerned by Mary Jean's editorial in No. 19, which stated that she's receiving very few SW submissions. Please keep writing and publishing, all you creative types! I promise to LoC. Except, I surely would appreciate some guidance, and I wonder if some other neos wouldn't, too. Is it poor etiquette to write a LoC that doesn't discuss every submission? Is it really OK to say you thought the characters were like cardboard, or is it better to remain silent? I don't know much about writing, and it's very difficult for me to contribute worthwhile evaluations about plotting, characterization, style, etc. Any suggestions? What exactly do writers, artists, and editors need/want to hear in a LoC?

Michelle Malkin: You always ask the most intriguing questions! It hadn't occurred to me that stormtrooper clones would be trained only in war; this would make them ready-made troops for whomever. My first thought would be to try to convert them into Alliance troops, but I don't know whether the constituency would fall for that again (that is, a new government, stocked with a full complement of stormtroopers!). The clones could be mind-wiped, but that makes the new government look pretty bad, too, by my standards, anyway.

Chris Callahan: Enjoyed all of your information for Aussiecon! So Deckard IS a replicant! That certainly makes BR a much deeper film. Now I wonder more than ever why they let him go? Liked your hypothesis that the Emperor used Vader to accelerate a process that had already begun. Which takes us back to that intriguing question of what exactly did happen to the Jedi, anyway?

Matthew Whitney: Hello, and welcome to our pool! Your theory about Luke's moral battle is consistent and interesting. A person who could astonish the Emperor by resisting his influence could also amaze Yoda by being the first to return from the Dark Side. It opens some interesting story options, such as Luke's analyzing what went wrong before with Jedi training, perhaps developing a "treatment" for Darksiders, and seeking out and

converting them back?

I recently read a theory in IN A FARAWAY GALAXY that Ben was manipulating Luke all along, using reverse psychology to encourage him to confront Vader both times. This theory held that Yoda and Ben disagreed about whether it was worth the risk to send/let Luke go to Bespin. I agree with your interpretation of Luke's reaction to the news that Vader is his father. As you say, it was a big gamble to expect him to react this way; a person whose illusions are destroyed can turn one way as easily as the other. I wonder if Yoda tried some new teaching methods with Luke, and felt this would be an interesting test case? If Luke passed the test against the nastiest the Empire could provide, then he'd be able to teach the New Order using the new methods. Looking forward to reading your stories, Matthew!

Ronda Henderson: Loved your cross-universe idea! It'd make a great cartoon, too! "Oh, Samantha, how could you saddle yourself with that barbarian, Barf Whosit?"

Sandi Jones: I agree that Luke's continual challenge of choosing one responsibility over another added dramatic conflict and depth to his story. I like Uncle Owen a little better for your suggestion that he may have made a deal with Ben to keep Luke on Tatooine. An interesting "Mirror, Mirror" story might come out of seeing Luke get his wish of going to the Academy. Of course, his hero Biggs went there, and still came out a rebel. But then, Biggs was not apparently a Force-user, either.

The idea that Vader was shielding Luke from the Emperor is quite credible. I wonder if he was even trying to shield him when the Emperor began to attack, but discovered that he couldn't manage it covertly, and found that he'd rather give up his dream of power, in exchange for both defeating his degenerate master, and saving Luke's life.

Your conception of a SW calendar is absolutely terrific--tell us about it! I just wish you'd thought it up in time for '86!

Sally Syrjala: I love your lustrous haiku! Interesting parallel between Spock/Luke and Han/Kirk--but I've always been a Kirk/Luke fan. I think what I enjoyed about the two is their positive approach to problem-solving and dynamic leadership. (I grant you, Luke's leadership is implied more than it is demonstrated in the saga.)

Bev Clark: I was fascinated by your analysis of the loss of Luke's hand. The analogy of a descent into Hell to learn of one's own capacity for evil tracks well with Luke's revelation in the cave, and echoes the experience in many rites of passage. Perhaps much of the emotional maturing process involves gaining self-knowledge so that one can (1) formulate values, (2) determine one's life goals, and (3) begin to divine one's own, and thus, other people's motivations. If you open your mind to understand why people do things, you can begin to master your fate.

Mary Kever: Poor, poor Buzz, I'll bet he did call out some names when he burned his hand! Hope it's OK now!

Carole Regine: An attempt by Yoda to bring Vader "back to the fold" would make a tantalizing cross-universe story! Enjoyed your ideas on the formation of the Jedi very much. Vader might have been a spy from the isolationist faction of Force-users, who infiltrated the Lightsiders. In any case, the existence of an alternate group makes Vader's and the Emperor's existence much less exceptional. I hadn't thought before that the dif-



ference between Light and Darksidars might be a matter of "mere" politics!

Cheree: Good suggestion that Palpatine was Force-shielding himself. I wonder if Vader was waiting to see whether Luke could shield himself in a similar fashion.

Carolyn Gollodge: Congratulations on your pro novel--WOW! Will we get it over here? Be sure to keep us posted!

I enjoyed the questions in your LoC, and have thoughts on a couple: (1) Why does Vader let the shuttle land on Endor? I wonder if he hoped to find out how much the Emperor knew of his plans? Or, perhaps he even intended to have one more private confrontation with Luke before the inevitable match with the Emperor--give him a few tips, if he was in the mood. (2) Did Solo know about Luke before Leia did? I can imagine Luke's searching for Leia, after they become separated, and wondering whether Vader had caught her, and coming to the decision that he'd go after her if Vader had captured her, then, finally deciding that he had to take the situation in hand, regardless. It would be logical for him to explain to Han that he'd go after Leia, explaining their relationship, they might've even discussed plans, etc.

Maybe when Yoda shared Luke's vision of Bespin, he regarded it as another test in ethics and self-knowledge for Luke. Maybe a great portion of Jedi training involves developing morals, resisting evil influence, etc. Or, maybe it's a new part of the curriculum because the old ways didn't always work.

Jeannie Webster: Ha! Barbara Stanwyck as the Falcon! I don't know whether the Falcon is THAT dignified, but she surely has Ma Barkley's spirit!

Barbara Tennison: Maybe the Emperor was Force-shielded (per Cheree) and drawing on Vader for the energy to keep his shield, which weakened Vader enough (he thought) to prevent him from turning on him.

Jeanine Hennig: I saw a T-shirt at Sci-Con that said, "Use the Force, Lugh"!

I think you must be right that not all Jedi are ghosting around. I've seen some fanfic where Jedi souls were sort of available for communion in special places--this is a neat idea--souls on call? Can't you see it now, "Oh, Ben, who's on the hotline today?"

Sally Smith: Thanks for the picture. I love your license plates! One of the girls at work has plates that say LDYHWK (am I the only person in the world who hasn't seen that movie yet?). ((Ed: I love fannish license plates! My own currently say HAN FAN, though, after three years, I'm tired of that and this spring will be getting ZINE ED. Jenni Hennig had LUKE FN on hers for a while. Another friend, who's a Dr. Who fan, has TME LRD on hers and another (a Tom Baker fan) had 4TH WHO for a while. There's a SW collector/dealer here in Dallas who has had OBIWAN for years. And once, on a Dallas freeway, I saw a car that said STR TRK, but I never got a chance to find out who that was.))

Your comments about the actors thinking about lunchtime were amusing! There's a scene in ANH where Mark Hamill appears to be belching, but I guess people have to eat lunch on the Death Star, same as everywhere else!

Bev Lorenstein: Enjoyed your analogies between karma and the Force, and Buddhist monks and Jedi. The more we all discuss it, the less I like the image of Jedi elitism. Maybe in the past, and certainly by the time of ANH, there's trouble getting people to admit to their Force abilities. Maybe

one of Luke's big challenges will be to persuade people that it's worthwhile to receive training.

Maggie Nowakowska: I guess I never knew how good I had it at work, until I read the story about your office bullies. This interpretation fits in well with Luke's observation that the Emperor's weakness is his overconfidence.

Interesting notion that Vader may have been the originator of Ben's belief that he was irredeemable. The suggestion that Yoda regarded Anakin-in-Vader as the most likely candidate to defeat the Emperor was an entirely new and astounding one to me, but is the kind of pragmatic belief an old fungus might have. Perhaps he further believed that balance had to be reinstated by the same one who upset the apple cart in the first place, and maybe that's one reason that Yoda appears to take such a passive role in the resolution of same.

A note to all who are attending MWC, I'll be with you in spirit, and hope you carry on the grand tradition by having a wonderful time! See you next issue!

## CIRCULAR REASONING

Carole Regine  
458 E. Elkhart St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19134

Sandi Jones: First, thanks for a detailed, well thought out article giving Luke credit where it's due. You strengthened each point by describing a less responsible action Luke might've taken and this prompted me to spend time speculating on the consequences of these alternate actions. "Luke's Responsibilities" did what the best articles (in my opinion) always do: It made me think about things that hadn't previously occurred to me. Second: It's true that we have only a few words on what Kenobi was like as a younger man, but in that TESB scene, he may have been admitting to more than just reckless behavior in his younger days. Consider: He was comparing himself with Luke while Yoda was comparing Luke with Vader/Anakin-about-to-fall. I liked your sympathetic view of Owen Lars. Have you read Susan Sizemore's "Hell to Pay" (GUARDIAN #6)? You might enjoy it as much as I did. I'd never liked ol' Uncle Owen and I'd never paid much attention to him til I'd read this short story. Now, I can't watch ANH without remembering Sizemore's Owen and the terrible new meaning she gave to his words, "Or there'll be hell to pay."

Matthew Whitney: Poor Threepio--denied a soul by circular reasoning! To say that C3PO doesn't have a soul because only sentient beings have souls and 3PO's not sentient, therefore, he can't have one, is a statement of personal belief, not an argument rooted in logic. If your view is based on religious belief, I'll bow out of this debate (IDIC!), but I can't accept your argument as a statement of fact. For me, droid sentience remains an open question. Next topic: Yoda and Obi-Wan's Big Gamble. You're crediting their forethought with an action Luke intended to take independent of their lie or

Vader's revelation. Beaten, unable to fight back, Luke climbed out over an abyss. Since there was no way off that ledge, but back the way he came, we must assume that Luke (a) intended to jump, (b) intended to remain on that ledge awaiting capture, (c) expected to be rescued, or (d) panicked. Discarding (d) as unlikely (Luke neither looked panicked in previous, similar situations--the Hoth Wampa's cave, for example--and (c) as unlikely (he knew his friends had already been captured), I'd say that (b) is equally implausible. It supposes that Luke would've risked his life to delay capture by only a few minutes, whereas immediate surrender would've guaranteed his survival. So, I conclude that Luke intended to jump. He climbed out on that ledge, said, "I'll never join you!" and he stepped down to the last foothold before Vader revealed their father-son relationship. If Yoda and Obi-Wan gambled, their gamble was unnecessary. Luke rejected the Dark Side before receiving what you believe was a planned shock. He'd followed through on a decision made before he'd learned the truth. If Yoda and Obi-Wan did gamble, they took a very foolish risk. They couldn't have known just when Vader would make his announcement. As you've said, learning the truth before the duel could've given Luke serious self-doubts as he went up against a superior opponent. Vader could have used the truth as a shock-weapon just before, or during the duel, gaining the very advantage Yoda and Obi-Wan hoped to deny him--and gaining it with greater power since Luke wouldn't have had time or trusted teachers to cushion the shock. Yoda and Obi-Wan's gamble would've ignored another, equally devastating possibility: Had Luke been cornered with no escape route, not even the near-suicidal one that he'd taken, he'd have been captured. Yoda and Obi-Wan had lied, not Vader; the natural question Vader, Palpatine or Luke himself would've asked is, "What else did Yoda and Obi-Wan lie about?" No doubt Luke did ask this question, but, fortunately, there were not Darksiders available, day and night, to help him answer it. Luke's behavior at the end of TESB (doubting Obi-Wan, answering Vader as "Father") suggests that the shock/revulsion he'd felt upon hearing the truth was already wearing thin. This shows what poor psychologists Yoda and Ben would've been if they'd hoped that shock and revulsion would have prevented Luke from eventually joining Vader, if Vader had had more time with his son. And, if Luke's feelings of revulsion had lasted, what would have prevented Palpatine from using Luke's self-doubts and doubts about his teachers to embitter and turn him to the Dark Side? (Although he chose the Light Side at the end of TESB, I don't believe that Luke, or anyone else is immune to temptation.) Given all these possibilities, Yoda and Obi-Wan's gamble would've considered only one scenario staged by blind luck. But based on their previous behavior, I think they deserved the benefit of the doubt. I'd rather assume they'd been caught off-guard and made a foolish mistake than accuse them of deliberately relying on uncontrollable random factors to support flip-of-the-coin gambling with lives. Now, on to Palpatine's taunting Luke: Here, we (finally!) agree. Palpatine had no reason to believe he risked anything by taunting Luke. Had Luke turned to the Dark Side, Palpatine would've gained a new servant; had Luke resisted (which he did), Palpatine had the power to kill him. In either case, he'd expected loyalty from a Dark Lord who'd served him for over twenty years--not an unreasonable expectation. Palpatine failed to turn Luke, but, as you've said,

failure is not always due to a mistake. However, the Emperor did make one mistake and an incredibly stupid one, at that: He betrayed Darth Vader then turned his back on him. That, and his failure to fully sense Vader's conflicting feelings about Luke, brought Palpatine's quite literal downfall. His mistake with Vader may earn Palpatine the label "senile", yet I find it hard to slap that label on him without slapping it on Yoda and Obi-Wan for their mistake. You're an interesting person to "talk" to, Matt. We heartily agree and strongly disagree on every other topic. Keep writing and take care of your pancreas!

Sandra Necchi: Another good article applying your real-world knowledge to the SW universe.

Mary Keever: Hey! What makes you so sure Luke's a virgin? Surely some lady on Hoth offered to warm his chilly bones! For the sake of every Marysue who ever lived, I'd like to think Commander Skywalker accepted a few offers. Mainly, I'd like to think he'd have accepted mine!

Vonnie Fleming: As one deviate to another, I must admit that Vader was my reason for seeing ANH repeatedly. Later, my heart enlarged to include Han and, since ROTJ, I've been a (gasping, panting) Lukefan, but Vader never fully lost his charm for me. Wasn't that quickie description of Anakin (in the ROTJ novelization) enticing?

Sally Syrjala: Yes, I do see Han and Kirk, Luke and Spock parallels. And notice the position of Luke's hands as he approached Jabba's throne: They're held in the sign for the Vulcan philosophy of Nome--but the sign's upside down! I've been a Spockfan since '66, but came to appreciate Kirk also after STAR TREK II. Considering my above message to Vonnie, I don't think my glandular reactions will be much help with your survey question. As for Billington's "Spandex" remark, I agree with you. I thought her comment was petty and in poor taste. Very true that there's always a new way to view SW events. Look at Barbara Tennison's thought that Yoda may not have known at first, that Vader had once been Anakin Skywalker. (Fine idea for a Yoda-Kenobi dialogue, Barbara. I'd like to see Obi-Wan stumble through his "point of view" story under Yoda's wise old eyes!)

Cheree: My feelings about Billington's remarks are no reflection on you as an editor. I hope you continue to reprint all matter of interest to SW fans. ((Ed: No offense taken, I assure you.))

Michelle Malkin: Aw, c'mon! Finish that dank Chewbacca tale, just to please a sister-Midwest-easterner! Loved your thought that Vader was having an off day when he offered Needa.

Just a Thought: In the ROTJ novelization, both Luke and Leia have vague memories of their mother, indicating that they weren't infants when separated from her. Could Mother Skywalker have spent years on the run with her children? Could Luke's *deja vu* feelings on Dagobah be a hint that he had been there before, with his mother and possibly Leia?

Barb Brayton/P. J. LaVasseur: The story you mentioned in your message to me, last ish, is "Loose Ends" by Karen Ripley (WOOKIEE COMMODORE #2) and I thought it was one of the best stories in the zine.

Marlene Karkoska: Good point that Luke obviously learned to "call" his lightsaber into his hand without instruction on how to do this from Ben. I agree that a Jedi can be self-taught after a push in the right direction. Yoda said Luke's training had been incomplete when he left Dagobah, yet when Luke returned to Dagobah, in ROTJ, Yoda said, "No more training do you require." Seems clear to me that

Luke had given himself a further Jedi education.

Carolyn Gollidge: Good thought that Anakin, seeing death and destruction all around him during the Clone Wars, might've begun using the Dark Side for vengeance or to win a battle. Equally good thought that Kenobi might've chosen to train Anakin himself because he felt that a young hotshot pilot was too valuable to the Republic to send him away to Dagobah while a war was going on. I agree with Bev Clark's suggestion that Kenobi probably enjoyed the reflected glory of teaching a pupil like Anakin, but perhaps Kenobi's reasons were not as selfish as he's implied they were. After seeing the destruction of the Jedi Knighthood, Kenobi might've been pathetically willing to overdo the self-castigation. When Owen Lars told Luke that Obi-Wan "died about the same time as your father", his remark might've been more than a simple lie. We saw Kenobi twenty years after the destruction of the Knighthood, but Owen Lars saw him just after that catastrophe.

Ronda Henderson: I agree that Vader/Anakin would've preferred death to facing the hatred (and very likely, the punishment) his life as Darth Vader had earned him. The ROTJ novelization suggests that he tried to follow Palpatine down the reactor shaft, but hadn't the strength left to do so. I'll always wonder (until some fan writer decides to tell us!) how Vader/Anakin reacted to the forgiving welcome Yoda and Obi-Wan must've given him when he reached their afterdeath plane of existence.

## ACCOLADES

Marlene Karkoska  
656 S. Belvoir Blvd.  
S. Euclid, OH 44121

January 20, 1986

There were so many interesting ideas in SE#10 that I wrote notes beside almost every letter, but in order to avoid being banned from Cheree's letter-zine, I'm going to have to omit some things. If I don't mention your letter, it probably wasn't because I didn't want to! ((Ed--Marlene! I never ban anybody from SE! I just grit my teeth and keep typing!))

I enjoyed Sandra Necchi's article. It was intelligent and showed that much thought had gone into it. I particularly enjoyed the discussion about the Tuskans and humans on Tatooine, and the comments about droids in the SW universe. I still maintain that droids and humans are not equals (I explained my reasons in SE#8 and #10), but although we aren't in complete agreement, Sandi, I was interested in your ideas and enjoyed your discussion.

I very much approve of the suggestion by Pat Nussman and Sharon Saye that we give feedback to authors of outstanding pieces of fan fiction by mentioning them in SE, to let the authors know that their work is appreciated and brought us pleasure. They deserve accolades for a job well done! Mentioning excellent pieces of fiction is also helpful to those folks like myself who do not attend cons and whose friends are not involved in fandom and might not otherwise hear of them. Zine prices being what they are, it's not possible to purchase all of them, and I appreciate suggestions about outstanding

fan fiction. I like having them "advertised" in SE. It was through Sharon's comment to Maggie Nowakowska about A NEW CHALLENGE in SE#10 that I learned of the existence of that terrific novel.

Lin Ward: I have enjoyed all of your letters in SE! I liked your "clone scenario." However, since there don't seem to be any clones present in the middle trilogy (unless the stormtroopers are clones), I still think that the clones were never actually produced, and that the Clone Wars were fought over the issue of clones. It is possible though, that the issue wasn't whether or not to "manufacture people", as I suggested, but exactly what the status of those future clones would be, as you propose.

To answer a previous question, I would have a personal robot put up bulletin boards and take my recess duty on cold, snowy days. I'm not particularly fond of those chores!

Sandi Jones: I agree that in many instances, Luke was caught between two conflicting responsibilities and was forced to make difficult choices between them. He did what he "felt" was right, and the happy ending of ROTJ attests to the fact that Luke made the correct decisions.

I enjoyed your scenario about Anakin Skywalker and the lightsaber. Sounds very plausible. I also found your speculation about what kind of a possible agreement was reached between Ben Kenobi and Owen Lars, interesting. However, I doubt that Owen ever promised that if Luke were needed, he would be told of his heritage, or if he did, it seems that he wasn't too willing to stick to the bargain. He seemed very anxious to keep Luke as far away from Ben as possible. MY question is: WHY did Owen agree to raise Luke? It seems to me that until Luke was at least 10, he couldn't have been much help on the farm. He would have been more of a burden--an extra person to feed, clothe and shelter, not to mention the fact that harboring Luke could have been downright dangerous if somehow Luke's existence became known to Vader or the Emperor. I am curious about why Owen Lars was willing to take the enormous risk and responsibility of being Luke Skywalker's guardian. What was in it for him? Does anyone have any ideas? Was he just a soft-hearted individual who felt sorry for a homeless baby boy (perhaps his sister's son)? It would make an interesting story, I think.

I also wonder why Luke was allowed to keep his last name. It seems as though Ben Kenobi and Owen Lars were asking for trouble by not changing it to something other than Skywalker. If they were trying to hide Luke from his father and the Emperor, I think it would have been far wiser for them to call him "Luke Lars", as they gave Leia her guardian's last name. Does anybody have any ideas about why Luke remained a "Skywalker" despite the potential disaster the name could bring to him and to his guardians? (It's possible, that even much later, after the destruction of the first Death Star, that Luke's name may have been at least partially responsible for Vader's discovery of his son's existence.)

The Skywalker name brings me to a question that I have for Marcia Brin. Marcia, you suggested a while ago that Anakin Skywalker and Darth Vader were two different people. You further suggested that perhaps Han Solo is Anakin's son and Luke is Darth's son. If this is true, why is Luke called SKYWALKER? Wouldn't it make more sense in that case for Han to be Vader's son and for Luke to be Anakin's? How's that for a story idea?

Jean Stevenson: First of all, Jean, when I said in SE#9 that "No one who is involved with a crime lord is a good or nice person", I meant no one who is voluntarily involved. I'm sorry that I did not make my meaning clear. It did seem that all of the individuals aboard the sailbarge when it was destroyed were there of their own volition. They didn't seem to be forced to be in attendance, they simply seemed to consider viewing the planned execution of Luke, Han and Chewie to be a grand form of entertainment. I don't have too much sympathy for any of them.

As to your incest comments, Luke and Leia's guardians and Yoda and Ben kept the secret of the twinship from Leia and Luke for 20+ years. I hardly think that Luke should be condemned for not sharing the new-found knowledge with his sister for a day or two. (Especially since they were planning and engaged in a very vital mission during that time and Luke hoped to spare Leia any more problems if he could.) I can't imagine how the slight delay could make Luke even remotely guilty of incest or how it could make anyone viewing the film think that he was guilty of it or contemplating it. It certainly never occurred to me!

Jean, you and others have mentioned a few times that you think it is significant that Han used the lightsaber on Hoth to open the tauntaun's belly. You have hinted that this is proof that Han is a Jedi Knight or at least a Force-user. I don't agree. Turning on a lightsaber doesn't seem to be a very difficult skill. Luke learned how to do it immediately upon being presented with the saber, with no prior instruction. I'm sure that during the three years between ANH and TESB, Han had frequent opportunities to watch Luke turn on the lightsaber and practice with it. Despite Han's skepticism about the Force and his scoffing at "ancient weapons", I would wager that Han was probably more than a little curious about his best friend's weapon. Han's own blaster has probably been his most important possession (aside from the Falcon) for much of his life, and I'm sure that he had more than a passing interest in any kind of weapon. He probably observed Luke very carefully when young Skywalker switched on and used his saber. Therefore, I don't think it was surprising that Han would know how to turn on the lightsaber, and it doesn't take much skill to point it at something and let the energy blade do the rest. Turning the saber and pointing it at a tauntaun does not make Han a Jedi. If I may use an analogy here: I can turn on a powersaw and point it at a piece of wood and the saw will slice the wood, but that does not make me an expert craftsman of fine furniture. Han Solo never used the lightsaber in a duel or in a situation where skill, technique and timing are necessary, and there is no evidence in the SW saga that he makes a lightsaber, either. Han is a terrific character, and he has many wonderful skills, strengths and abilities, but I do not agree that Jedi talents are among them.

Sally Syrjala: This Luke-fan preferred Jim Kirk to Spock. I don't think Luke is at all like Spock! He's quieter, calmer, and more patient than he once was, yes, but Luke's not unemotional or unfeeling.

Carolyn Gollodge: You asked, "How much time has elapsed between Han's rescue on Tatooine and the mission to Endor?" I think just two or three days separate the two adventures. Before Luke parted company with the Falcon's occupants, Leia said, "Hurry! The fleet should be assembled by now." It seemed that the Endor mission was dis-

cussed very soon after Leia and Han made it back to the fleet, and they seemed to leave for Endor soon after the meeting.

Your comment about Yoda prompting Luke to see the future even though he probably knew what Luke would discover was an interesting point. Maybe although Yoda kept telling Luke he shouldn't go to Bespin, he actually hoped he would! Luke may have really passed a test when he decided to risk his life to try to save his friends. As you quoted in SE#9, "No greater love hath a man than he lay down his life for his friends." (Or be willing to do so!) A Jedi, with all his powers and talents, could be a dangerous individual if he weren't "leashed by love" (to quote Jean Stevenson)--if he weren't a loving, compassionate person who cared about others. Luke's decision to go to Bespin proved his capacity for love. And, as you so eloquently put it, "Love is the greatest Force in the universe."

Maggie Nowakowska: Your explanation for the Emperor's behavior makes sense out of what I formerly saw as sheer stupidity on Palpatine's part (seemingly spoiling his own chances to gain a Dark Lord). I agree with your idea that perhaps to embrace the Dark Side one must do so with full knowledge and consent, and must be fully conscious of what he or she is doing. That is very similar to committing a mortal sin (the Catholic equivalent of "falling to the Dark"). To be guilty of a mortal sin, the individual must know the act is grievously wrong and must fully, consciously, and deliberately decide to do it anyway, without any coercion. He or she can't be tricked into it or only be partially aware of what he or she is doing. Maybe the Emperor wasn't as crazy as he appeared. (Overconfident, but not crazy.) Maybe he knew Luke couldn't be forced or tricked into embracing the Dark Side OR unconsciously "fall" to the Dark when he wasn't fully aware of his actions (as I believe was the case when Luke fought Vader in a frenzied state because of his concern for Leia). Luke had to choose the Dark Side freely and deliberately, fully cognizant of what he was doing. As you said, "He must be able to turn to Palpatine and laugh with him. He must knowingly, willingly and coolly make the final thrust that kills Vader and puts Luke at Palpatine's side." Fortunately, when the Emperor's taunts brought him back to his senses (someone suggested it was like the equivalent of having cold water splashed in his face), Luke chose the Light (and death, if necessary), rather than the Dark.

I also like Sally Smith's idea that Luke HAD to be tempted by the Dark Side to truly be a Jedi. Probably all Jedi candidates must confront the Dark in some form or other as their final test before achieving Knighthood.

Matthew Whitney: Welcome to SE! It's nice to have another male LoCer. I'm sure Tim Blaes will be delighted!

Lisa Thomas: THANK YOU! Your LoC effectively puts to rest the "carefully hidden dialogue in the Death Star scene" controversy! A person who worked on the dialogue for ROTJ certainly ought to know!

Since I didn't start reading SE until early 1984, I don't know whether or not this subject was ever discussed before, but I wanted to say that I think that "Return of the Jedi" was a very appropriate name for the 3rd film in the SW trilogy. I know that a lot of people expected the title to mean the Return of Yoda's "other" Jedi, but it didn't turn out that way. Instead, I think, the title actually proclaimed two returns. First, there was the personal return of the Jedi, Anakin Skywalker,

back to the Light Side of the Force, and then there was the more general return of the Jedi as an organization to the Galaxy. With the victory of Luke Skywalker over the Dark, there was a Jedi Knight in the Galaxy for the first time in 20 years (except for Ben Kenobi) and, more importantly, a Jedi survived to re-establish the Order. If Luke had fallen or had been killed by the Emperor, there would have been no one left to restore the Order and the Jedi would have become extinct. However, Luke's triumph over the Dark paved the way for the Return of the Jedi Knights to the Galaxy and a renewal of the Jedi organization... And I do think that Yoda WAS commissioning Luke to train new knights and re-establish the Order when he said, "Pass on what you have learned." Luke was "A New Hope" for the Jedi, and with his victory over the Dark Side, there would be a "Return of the Jedi" to that Galaxy far, far away.

However, I still wonder if Luke will be able to restore the Order immediately after the fighting is over or if he'll be forced (after teaching Leia), to wait until his own children and the children of Han and Leia are old enough to begin training. I have very much enjoyed all of the fan fiction stories in which Luke has started to search for and train Force-talented individuals. However, as I mentioned in one of my first LoCs to SE, it is possible that in the universe of George Lucas, Luke and Leia may be the only two individuals capable of learning to use the Force at that particular time in the Galaxy's history. (Due to the purge of the Knights and probably their whole families about the time that the twins were born.) It would be more logical and, I think, more exciting if there were other Force talents waiting to be discovered. However, if they do exist, why didn't Yoda, Ben or Darth Vader train them? Why did the Emperor consider Luke to be such a important prize if Force-users or Force-talents were a dime a dozen? Does anyone have any possible explanations? (I would think that Yoda would have trained any other existing Force talent before he shared his skills with a Skywalker because others who were not related to Vader would have been better prospects to send to confront old Darth. They could have been more objective and the experience would not have been as traumatic for them.)

Of course, if Luke and Leia are the only two persons in the galaxy capable of using the Force and producing Force-talented offspring, they both better plan to have LARGE families for the "Good of the Order"! It could present a problem if they turned out to be strict proponents of planned parenthood!

So what would Luke do while he waited for the children to grow up so he could teach them and start the Restoration of the Order? Well, I do think Luke could probably be a fairly good diplomat and mediator, and in troublesome areas or situations, he'd make a good one man A-Team! Does anyone have any other ideas? (I don't think Leia will be very active in the Jedi School when it's set up. I think she'll take a position in the New Republic government.)

Despite my good intentions, and despite deleting many comments, this letter is still a monster! Until next time, may you have clear skies, smooth flights and safe landings!



Maggie Nowakowska  
2330 Federal Avenue East  
Seattle, WA 98102

First 1986 SE LoC: Happy New Year everyone!

Oh, pshaw, Mickey, I KNOW where Philadelphia is, honest--it's a lot closer to cons than Seattle is. Seriously, I suspect my slip into geographic distortion can be blamed on a couple of factors: (1) When I was growing up in Cleveland, it was fashionable to consider the city as the far western border of the Middle Atlantic states, fashionable in Cleveland, that is; everyone else considered us part of the Midwest. Perhaps old habits worked bass-akward to include the Mid-Atlantic in the Midwest in return. (2) Living on the West Coast can also give one strange perceptions of geography. For one, any place within 50 miles is next door, and 500 miles is just a hop away. Further, the rest of the country tends to lump everyone on the West Coast into one group, no matter that San Diego is 1258 (approx) miles away from Seattle. A West Coaster can easily slip into the habit of returning the favor by regarding any other place within 1000 miles of another as belonging to the same region. Using this kind of reasoning, Chicago and Philly aren't that far away, after all...

I agree with Matthew Whitney that John Fogarty appears to be of the Solo line; there was a young actor on the Hardy Boys that I also think would make a good Solo relative, but damned if I can think of his name. I've always thought that a good candidate for the Solo cousin Han hates to discover standing outside his hatch door would be Steve Martin; when Ford is mugging, they look amazingly alike.

One thought in response to Sandi Jones' article on Luke's various reactions to responsibility: Your reason for Luke leaving the homestead quickly is fine. I would like to add that we don't know the legal situation regarding the Lars land and so can't really make any assumptions on what Luke's duty was regarding the same. It's entirely possible that he had no legal offices to carry out upon Owen's and Beru's deaths. We don't know if Owen owned or leased the property. The farm may have reverted automatically to the community, a financial establishment, open auction, whatever. This is, of course, the stuff stories are made of. Since the SW Saga includes many twists from "common assumptions", such as Leia's level of responsibility in the Senate and in the Alliance at an age--not to mention sex--not usually found in current Western culture, I think one must first tackle any seeming anomaly in the Saga's story development with a question about the assumptions implied first by one's reaction that the development is an anomaly, and then with explorations of other, uncommon reasons for the anomaly.

I laughed out loud with recognition when I read Tim Blaes' admission that he could never put himself successfully into a story as a love interest for Leia 'cause the reality of it all just wouldn't work. Good for him! I've never really been successful in that kind of fantacizing, either, even with my own versions of the characters. Try as I might (and I have tried mightily!), I can never create a realistic relationship for me with ThousandWorlds Kenobi; if the differences in skill, education, social status, etc., don't defeat me, simple embarrassment at my indulgence does. I do have to admit, though, that my subconscious has had no trouble injecting mainstream SW Lando into my dreams. Must be my years in the fast-talking world

of advertising coming to haunt me for my sins (to forestall any wise acres out there, it was a very small (pop. 2) agency, with honest clients and honest products to sell. Which is probably why it didn't make any money and why it became an even smaller (pop. 1) agency within two years. Sigh.).

Sharon Saye's comments on participation in fandom got me to thinking that maybe one of the problems in discussing the subject is confusion over which area of fandom to which one belongs. It's long been observed that people are in fandom for different reasons, and that saying you're a SW (or Trek or Who) fan does not necessarily mean you have anything beyond "Wow, it's great, isn't it?" to say to a newly-met fellow fan. If I were to draw an "organization" chart of SW fandom, just off the top of my head as I pound on the computer, I could imagine something like this chart below.

For me, this diagram is a map of the potential confusion/conflict among SW fans regarding what they want out of their fandom, especially out of SWzines. Four different Prime areas of interest in SW are shown here (there are probably many more, and yes, they overlap, but years and years of reading letterzines has led me to the conviction that most of us do have hard-core Prime interests while maintaining various other levels of interest in other areas). All four feed into SWzinedom. Further, among active SWzinefans, there are three categories shown. These last three also overlap a lot...but my experience is that they are Prime SWzine Fannish Activity.

When all these categories use letterzines for communication, a lot of miscommunication is possible when folk do not realize that these different categories exist, or that these categories have their own language references, goals, spotlights of interest, attitudes and assumptions. It is easy to end

up with, to use myself as an example, a SW universe/SWzinefan wondering why there is so much emphasis on one character/actor, or why there is so much need for consensus among some fans for whom fandom is an important social expression. That's not what I read letterzines for, one mumbles to oneself a lot.

Ideally, a letterzine contains enough letters and articles to cover all Prime Interest areas. No one is forcing me to read letters about subjects I am not interested in. Problems do arise though, usually when one category of fans starts to dominate a letterzine (and that seems to happen again and again and again, no matter the fannish object). Or, when it happens, as mentioned before, one category of fans writes as if theirs is the only category, using language and assumptions that get other category fans irritated.

I suspect some of the problems that exist between Lucasfilm and SWzine fandom, or, for that matter, between SWzine fandom and other people in general who call themselves SW fans, can be charted here too. Although there are active SW fans in the SF tradition who are members of the SWFC, generally the fan club seems to be a separate category, and I suspect that LF's relations with that category works, in general, as well as any human endeavor. In other words, I think that when we say "SW fans" in our letters here and elsewhere, we are really talking from a category of fans a couple levels deep in an overall SW fan breakdown, and that LF is talking on a level a few steps away, perhaps distance far enough to call it an apples and oranges discussion.

If anyone is interested in fine-tuning (expanding, editing, debunking...) such a diagram, drop me a line and maybe we can update it for future issues.

