

Darth Vader, Dark Lord
The Afterworld
A Galaxy Far, Far Away

April 21, 1986

Greetings, Earthlings.

Do not be alarmed; this appearance will be brief. I would merely like to give my thanks to you fen out there who have been supporting me so loyally. (Especially Vonnie Fleming.)

Vonnie, I like your idea of "Vader Fen of the Galaxy Unite"! I've been trying to get my son into something like that. I keep telling him, "Join them, and together you can rule the galaxy as fans and son." But he just looks at me sideways and tells me to fade out. Children are becoming awfully independent these days, aren't they? (*sigh*)

So once again, I thank all of you for your loyalty. (And did I kill Captain Needa? you ask. Well, you may never know...)

Keep up the good work.

P. S. Jeanine Hennig: Would you ever consider writing something about the private life of a Sith-lord?

((Ed's note: As God is my witness, this actually came in the mail! And not from Vonnie Fleming!))

Clones

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April 25, 1986

There were lots of thought-provoking ideas in SE#11 and people with differing opinions were able to politely disagree without acrimony. HOORAY! I much prefer the recent peaceful discussions to the previous verbal WARS! I know that a lot of people disagreed with my opinion that Ben and Yoda should have told Luke the truth about his father before he left for Bespin, but they expressed their disagreement without rancor. My position on this issue has not changed. However, I wanted to state for the record that while I think Yoda and Ben were wrong in this instance, I still do like these characters very much. I just don't see them as infallible. They can make mistakes like anyone else. A Jedi is not a god. However, I think they are basically good and wise individuals and the STAR WARS films are richer because of their contributions to the Saga.

I'd like to follow Liz Sharpe's suggestion that we give honorable mentions to artists as well as writers of fan fiction. Some of the cover art that I found especially appealing during the past year were Laura Virgil's drawing of Han and Luke for SOUTHERN KNIGHTS #1, Liz Hoolahan's Han, Luke and Leia for GUARDIAN #7, Karen River's Han and Chewie for WOOKIEE COMMODORE II, Melea Fisher's Luke and Leia for ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE DAGOBAH, and Carolyn Cooper's colorful front and back covers of Han and Luke for FROM A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW. All of Jim Markle's drawings in ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE DAGOBAH are wonderful and Jean Kluge's Han and

a drawing of Luke and Obi-Wan in GUARDIAN #7 are lovely!

Liz Sharpe: WOW, Liz! What a fascinating theory about the fall of the Republic and the Jedi! I loved it! Your article is scholarly, thorough, and fluently written. Your theory is plausible, logical and nicely derived from on-screen facts. It would make a great background for the first trilogy story, I think. I applaud your efforts to solve the mystery of the past from the pieces of the puzzle that were presented in the middle trilogy! The issue of clones probably did bring about the ultimate fall of the Republic and the Jedi. Whether or not the clones were ever actually produced, you're probably right that "...it was the ideological repercussions of this sudden advance, more than its concrete manifestations which threw the Old Republic into an uproar." You may also be right that the Jedi (and the Republic, too) may have lacked a key leader during this time of crisis while the Republic's enemies may have been very well organized and had the advantage of a strong, dynamic leader (Palpatine?), whose goals were clear and well-established and who had a large, loyal following. The enemies of the Old Republic and the Jedi probably did misdirect the research that made cloning possible and this caused the mass hysteria that these enemies hoped it would. Perhaps these enemies then started vicious rumors to the effect that the Jedi were planning to clone themselves many times over in order to take control of the Galaxy and to establish themselves as superior citizens who would treat "normal" individuals who were not Force-gifted as inferiors (that is, if Force ability can be cloned along with the person!). This could have aroused tremendous panic in some "normal" individuals who may have fantasized about hordes of powerful Force-wielding Jedi abusing their powers and forcing them (pun intended) into submission. (Especially after the news of Vader's fall was spread.) Perhaps many of these individuals were so frightened, that they were persuaded by the enemies of the Jedi to help eliminate the Knights before they could be cloned. Perhaps even some former friends and allies of the Jedi betrayed the Knights and led unsuspecting Jedi Knights to their executions. [Betrayal by close friends would help explain how the powerful Knights were destroyed within a rather short period of time. Also, maybe at any given period of the Galaxy's history there were a relatively small number of Jedi Knights actively serving the Republic--perhaps several hundred. I realize that the Galaxy is very large (1000 worlds?), but it only took two Dark Siders, Vader and the Emperor, to effectively control the Galaxy with the help of the Imperial forces... And look at what one newly trained, very inexperienced, not-quite-Jedi Knight (Luke Skywalker), managed to accomplish almost single handedly on Tatooine! So, it seems possible that even several hundred Knights, with Republic Forces at their disposal (and patrolling and monitoring given systems for the Jedi), could have guarded the Galaxy quite efficiently. Perhaps when problems arose in a system, a small group of Jedi Knights, working in conjunction with the Republic Forces, quickly and effectively resolved the difficulty. (I realize it would make the job of preserving peace and justice a lot easier if there were many more Knights in service, but then it would be more difficult to understand how the Jedi were almost totally exterminated.))

If there was some anti-Jedi feeling in the Galaxy at the time of the Clone Wars, it seems that

after the Emperor, Vader and the Imperials took over, creating the "Dark Times", people regretted the loss of the Jedi Knights. I say this because the Alliance seemed to think highly of the Jedi. Leia was on her way to recruit the services of the last known Jedi (Ben Kenobi), when she was captured and the Alliance used the Jedi slogan, "May the Force be with you" almost like a blessing. Then, too, Luke was respected enough to be allowed aboard the Headquarters Frigate and was permitted to make his own decisions and choose his own assignments in his new status as Jedi.

I have heard many negative comments about the Jedi from STAR WARS fans. These fans seem to suggest that since the Jedi fell, there must have been something corrupt about them and their organization that led to their fall. In her article, Liz Sharpe even states, "There does seem to be a general feeling that the Jedi were corrupt." Speaking on behalf of the Jedi, I'd like to point out that the middle trilogy movies gives no evidence of Jedi corruption, nor do the novelizations. To requote Ben Kenobi in the SW novelization, speaking about Jedi Knights: "In many ways, they were too good, too trusting for their own health." The prologue says, "Having exterminated through treachery and deception the Jedi Knights, the Imperial governors and bureaucrats prepared to institute a reign of terror among the disheartened worlds of the Galaxy." Therefore, it's still my contention that the Jedi Knights were not inherently evil, and were not responsible for their own destruction, but rather, were victims who were betrayed and purged as they continued to protect the Republic. It was the Republic that fell because of corruption, but unfortunately, the Jedi failed to see that corruption in time, and fell with it (perhaps even betrayed by people very close to them in the Republic). So HOW did the Jedi get their rotten reputation among STAR WARS fans? How did the fans come to feel that the Jedi were morally tainted? Well, it's my theory that Darth Vader is responsible for tarnishing the Jedi's good name. We only see a few Jedi in the middle trilogy--Ben, Yoda, Luke and Vader. Since Ben incorporates early on and Luke is an apprentice through most of the trilogy, and Yoda mostly speaks rather than acts, Darth Vader's actions speak rather loudly. Knowing Vader was once a Jedi, and witnessing his terrible abuse of the Force seems to leave many STAR WARS fans with a rather negative impression of the whole Jedi order. I think some people feel that since Vader was corrupted, there must have been something wrong with the organization that caused him to fall, or there must have been other Knights who were evil as well. However, there is no evidence of this in either the films or novelizations. Perhaps if the audience could have seen "typical" Knights in action, their perception of the Jedi Order would be more favorable.

Michelle Malkin: Your comment about the kind of Jedi group Luke will form: "Going back to the same old thing could simply lead to the same old downfall," again suggests the idea that the old Jedi organization was either corrupt or faulty in some way and that a new Jedi Order should not be modeled on the old way. I may be in the minority here, but I disagree. Ben Kenobi said, "For over a thousand generations, the Jedi Knights were the guardians of peace and justice in the Old Republic." ANY organization or way of life that can not only continue to exist for that length of time but remain highly effective and respected as well, must have been a remarkable organization and DESERVES to be

emulated! To be able to withstand all of the changes that must have taken place during that incredible amount of time, and to operate efficiently in a vastly diverse Galaxy, is truly an impressive feat! I'm sure that if Luke were told that the order he founds will "only" be effective for the next thousand generations before it will face a crisis that will threaten its survival, he would be positively DELIGHTED! Not much lasts forever! Although I agree it would be very important to know exactly what caused the Jedi to nearly be brought to extinction in order to avoid having history repeat itself a thousand generations in the future, I also think it would be VERY beneficial to know what it was that they did do so well which enabled them to successfully protect the Galaxy for so long. As Liz Sharpe said in her article, "Whatever it was the Jedi did, they seem to have been remarkably effective in keeping the day to day existence of the Old Republic running smoothly." I agree, and contrary to those who feel that Luke should establish a totally different kind of Jedi Order than existed in the past, I hope Luke utilizes much of the Ancient Jedo Organization's ideals, structure, and mode of operation. (That is, if such knowledge is not lost to him. Perhaps some of his "friends long gone"--Yoda, Ben, even Anakin, and their ancestors and contacts can fill Luke in on Jedi history and Ancient Jedi methods of organization.) Obviously, there will be some differences in the New Jedi simply because Luke's a different person than the original founder of the ancient Order and the Galaxy is a different place than it was a thousand generations earlier. Still, I think much of the old way could be utilized. Even if Luke Skywalker has access to all of the Ancient Jedi knowledge, information and history, it will still be a monumental task to resurrect the Jedi Order. However, although it's true that Luke got the job of founding father of a new Jedi Organization sort of by default (he is, after all, the only surviving Jedi Knight!), I think that he is uniquely well-suited to the task and would have been a good choice to re-establish the Jedi Knights even if there had been hundreds of others for Ben and Yoda to choose from. Luke is a strong, compassionate, caring, creative individual who has learned the value of patience. He has a knack for solving difficult and unusual problems, and he has something of a charismatic quality about him--something appealing. He has also demonstrated leadership qualities. Even in his first battle, fresh off the farm, he was cool and capable when his squadron leader's death left him in charge. In addition, Luke's brush with the Dark Side and his memory of what happened to his father will probably cause him to take extra precautions when he sets up the Jedi school and begins training others. He will be more likely to question his own judgement and seek advice when in real doubt, and to limit his own authority than another Jedi might be.

Jeanine Hennig: As one who is solely a reader of fan fiction and not a writer, I'm probably totally unqualified to answer your question about whether the characters are Lucas' or the fan fiction writers', but I decided to put in my two cents' worth anyway. I purchase zines to read about the characters I know and love--Lucas' characters. If the principal characters in fan fiction are portrayed too differently from the screen versions and don't seem to be the same people, or if the characters behave in ways totally inappropriate for the characters presented to us by Lucas, my interest in the

story and enjoyment of it are diminished, no matter how creative or well-written the story may be. I've got to be able to recognize the characters as having the same qualities and personalities as the screen characters or for me, the story's credibility is affected. If a character is presented who bears little or no resemblance to the on-screen character, then I prefer that the character be given a different name and be introduced as an original character.

I still think that the fan writer has plenty of leeway and can be quite creative when writing about Lucas' characters without destroying the characters' basic personalities, because all of the Big Three are complex individuals. They can be unpredictable at times and are capable of surprising us. (Part of their charm, I think!) Also, because each person perceives things a little differently, the Han, Luke, and Leia of different fan writers will have a slightly different flavor to them. That, I don't mind. However, when any of the major characters is portrayed totally inaccurately--as incredibly weak, cold or foolish, or as an evil Dark Sider, I am immediately turned off by such stories because the character is totally alien and I can't accept him or her as being Luke, Han or Leia. Also, if one character in a story is purposely degraded in order to make another character seem more wonderful, I do not enjoy those stories either. Lucas' characters complement one another, help one another, and love one another; they don't compete with one another for supremacy. So, I guess my answer is that the characters are Lucas' and I prefer them that way.

Carolyn Gollidge: A belated contragulations on going pro! I definitely agree with your comments to Jean Stevenson that the reason Luke didn't tell Leia that he was her brother sooner was that he wanted to spare her the emotional shock of discovering that she was Vader's daughter on the eve of battle. If not for the problem of dear old Dad, I agree--Luke would have "thrown a party to celebrate!"

Bev Clark: I liked your idea that Yoda may have hidden himself and Dagobah from the rest of the Galaxy so that he could remain an "insurance policy" for the Jedi.

Kerri Smithline: It was acknowledged in ROTJ that Luke and Leia were twins, so they could not have been born years apart. Also, Leia couldn't have had a different father because Yoda referred to "the Other" as a Skywalker.

Mary Kever: I liked your idea that perhaps in normal times Jedi children were trained from birth. If being a Jedi is a way of life as well as a career (as it seems to be), it seems likely that it would be beneficial to start early. Maybe if children are taught young enough and gradually enough, the danger of falling to the Dark isn't as great as with Force talents who are taught later in life and whose training is rushed. Perhaps that was why Vader fell and the Dark Side was a danger to Luke--both began their training well past early childhood, and Luke at least, seemed to receive a crash course in Jedi teachings. He certainly was not accorded the luxury of spending leisurely years studying Jedi doctrine and history or perfecting newly learned Jedi skills. He was "thrown into the lion's den", so to speak, almost immediately. I always had the impression (and I could be wrong about this!), that there were very few Jedi Knights in the history of the Galaxy that fell to the Dark. (In fact, Vader may have been the first.) If that's true, perhaps it's because throughout history, almost all Jedi were taught from infancy and those

trained in Jedi beliefs that early in life and encouraged to be "patient, calm, at peace" even as babies or toddlers, were rarely tempted by the Dark Side.

The reprints of articles about Lucas in SE#11 were not very encouraging about the future of SW. They give the impression that the interest of the masses in SW is gone. I don't believe that's true. If a new film were in the works, I believe there would again be an outbreak of STAR WARS fever. It's difficult for most people to sustain enthusiasm for something that seems to be ended. If, however, there were indications from Lucasfilm that a new SW film was being produced, I believe it would spark a renewed interest in the SW saga. The children in my current first grade class are proof that the SW universe retains its appeal. Ever since TESB was shown on cable (and with the subsequent release of ROTJ on videocassette), the children haven't stopped chatting about SW, drawing pictures of SW characters and vehicles in their free time, playing SW at recess, and lamenting the fact that they can't find Han, Luke and Leia action figures at the local toy-store. Among the six-year-old set, at least, STAR WARS is alive and well! ...And the popularity of the ROTJ videocassette (as evidenced by both sales and rentals) attests to the fact that many adults remain fond of that faraway galaxy also. ((Ed: My sister-in-law is a first grade teacher and she has said the same thing regarding SW and her little ones. She keeps the trilogy handy and shows some of it on rainy days when the weather keeps the kids inside. They love it!))

Here's a bit of trivia for those of you who don't know: Cleveland's major indoor soccer league team is the Cleveland Force--named for the SW Force. The Force won first place in the Eastern Division this year for the first time in the history of the franchise. They are currently in the playoffs and have just won the quarterfinal round. When the Force plays at home, the Collesium is darkened, a star field is simulated, and the STAR WARS main theme is played as the team is introduced, and Darth Vader, the team mascot, cheers them on, while some fans wave lightsabers. (Vader was banned by Lucasfilm's lawyers for a time, because Lucas said it wasn't right for a symbol of evil to be a team mascot, but he must have relented, because Old Darth returned late in the season.)

Well, Cheree, so much for "giving you a break" this time! This letter is even longer than usual! (SIGH) I think someone had better hide my pen! That's about the only way to keep this "motormouth" from getting "carried away", it seem! Have a happy summer, everyone!



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April 25, 1986

Well, this issue we're back as a team again, so here goes.

CHALLENGER Tragedy: Helluva way to start the year. Anyone who remembers the Apollo fire (Barb: I do, Ed White was my hero) and the near miss with Apollo 13, knows that space travel is a risky business. But these seven deaths are no less heart-breaking for knowing that. (Barb) I have always loved "The Phoenix" from MINUS TEN AND COUNTING, now it will take on an added meaning. Then there is John Denver's beautiful "Flying For Me" and a verse I recently read by Archibald McLeish called "The Young Dead Soldiers". It ends like this: "...we leave you our deaths. Give them their meaning./.. we were young. We have died. Remember us." Let us remember our astronauts in the best possible way. Let's fix the problem and get on with it.

Clones: Excellent article by Liz Sharpe. If anyone is interested, LeGuin wrote an excellent short story called "Nine Lives" which really makes one sit up and take notice about the issue of clones. It's in a collection called MODERN SCIENCE FICTION put out by Anchor Books.

Just a minor correction: The picture was taken in Sitka, Alaska. ((Ed: Whoops! Sorry 'bout that!))
Ewoks: (Barb) "The Battle for Endor" was very enjoyable. I loved Teek and Wilfred Brimley's character.

Malkin: (Pam) Not to mention the fact that Zorro wore a black mask as well as the black hat! And didn't he also ride a black horse? Tolkien fans out there will see the imagery and implications in that! ((Ed: Hey, the Lone Ranger wore a black mask, too!))

Whitney: (Barb) I like your idea that Luke had a plan to get the Emperor to expend power to attack him. It makes sense.

Blaes: (Barb) Sorry, but my folks apparently got rid of that Civil War book. I'll check at the library.

Mularski: We have been writing letters together because we often want to say the same things. We've tried not to make it confusing. The best way to tell who's making which comment is by the name that appears in front of it. If there's no name then we basically said the same thing when we were jotting down notes, and refined the comment when the letter was typed.

(Barb) What's this about Harrison Ford's performance in ROTJ? I thought it was fine. He wouldn't use a bad back as an excuse in any case.

As long as people are mentioning their favorite stories, I will put in a plug for A LIGHT FROM THE DARK by Mary Jean Holmes. There is a sequel out now called TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY. She handles the characters very well.

Ward: (Pam) Usually if you are honest and state exactly why you did or did not like something the writer or the artist will get helpful feedback. You don't have to be an expert or go into complex evaluations, just try to think up constructive ideas if you do criticize.

Nowakowska: (Barb) I live in Denver, which of course, doesn't exist because everyone knows there is nothing between Chicago and Los Angeles.

Interesting chart. I could probably put myself in several places.

You have just found someone who strongly objects to the use of "Star Wars" to refer to SDI. I refuse to do so: it just makes me wild. As far as I'm concerned, this is right up there with calling the MX missile the "Peacekeeper." Ridiculous. Lucas was perfectly correct to sue and it's too bad he lost.

Golledge: (Barb) Yes, I agree that Han might already have said, "I love you." And I too am fond of "Love's Mysteries."

Clark: Nice letter. Your points regarding Lucasfilm and fandom are well taken. We have to keep this whole thing in perspective.

We agree with Cheree about Deckard not being a replicant; it does give a deeper meaning to the film, especially his relationship with Rachael. As to the ending, we prefer the second, because we don't like to be left in limbo. In any case, subsequent stories have pretty much ignored it.

Webster: (Pam) A. C. Crispin. That's an interesting comment from someone who wrote YESTERDAY'S SON and is currently working on the sequel, both ST books. We got to hear her at Alti-Egos last year and neither one of us was impressed.

Callahan: (Pam) All this talk of droids having or not having rights got me to thinking about 2010 and HAL. I remember a scene where a discussion was going on about how flexible and independent HAL really was, when Roy Scheider popped up and said he believed HAL to be no more than a mechanical extension of the personality of his creator. He believed a lot of the personality was programmed in to make HAL more "user-friendly". 3PO seems to be a variant on this theme and I don't see him in the same league as V'ger +.

Hennig: (Barb) Yes, I saw Mark Hamill in AMAZING STORIES and I thought it was quite good.

Thomas: (Pam) If the stormtroopers are clones, it doesn't necessarily follow that they are from the same vat. Hence, different heights and girths.

Cheree: Ah, someone else who remembers JONNY QUEST. How about THE JETSONS (my favorite) or FIRE BALL XL-5? ASTRO-BOY? ((Ed: I adore THE JETSONS but never got into the other two. However, I remember watching THE HERCULOIDS and 8TH MAN.))

Now down to the final comments. If there are any Julian Glover fans out there, he is excellent in "By the Sword Divided" on MASTERPIECE THEATER.

Try this one as a sign off. "You have to have faith for that to work, Mr. Vincent."



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April 22, 1986

The arrival of each new issue of SE is always a happy event, and #11 proved even more so than usual due to the nice welcome comments offered by so many. Thank you to EVERYONE. It is great to belong to such a wonderful family.

I'm glad Carol Mularski asked what Mark Hamill has been up to, because it gives me a chance to put in some plugs for my favorite actor. In addition to the stage work Cheree mentioned, he has just completed a run of almost two months in the off-Broadway produced of ROOM SERVICE. Directed by Alan Arkin at the Roundabout Theater, the 1937 play is a hysterical farce, and was once made into a Marx Brothers film. Mark superbly played Gordon Miller (Groucho's role), a sleazy producer trying to raise the cash to put on a new play. ROOM SERVICE was enormously successful, both critically and financially. Ticket sales went so well, in fact, that the run was extended by a week and there was even consideration of taking it to Broadway itself. (Final decision was "no." Shame. It would have done very well.)

During the run, I made three trips to NYC to see it and got to meet Mark each time. One trip, on March 1st, was a gathering of several Hamill fans from various states, which we jokingly call the "Great Northeastern Hamill-thon of 1986." (Hi, gang!) Everyone had a super time, and it was a real joy to meet fellow fans. In no time, we all felt like we'd been friends for years and the day took on the atmosphere of a full scale con.

The last time I saw it, I was able to get a photo taken with Mark that I hope Cheree can reproduce for SE. Not exactly framed well, but that is us. I'm the one in the Indy hat. Ha! Ha! ((Ed: See photo elsewhere in this issue.))

I've said it before and I'll say it again--Mark Hamill is one of the finest, most caring people you can ever hope to meet. Each time I saw RS, he was more than happy to speak with us and sign autographs. Even if he appeared rushed or short of time, he took the effort to make sure he'd signed for everyone who wanted an autograph.

Carrie Fisher, meanwhile, recently had a couple of supporting roles in two new releases. First was a small but well-played part in Woody Allen's HANNAH AND HER SISTERS, but the second, in a cheapie called HOLLYWOOD VICE SQUAD, was not landmark for her career. In that she had a thankless role as an undercover police officer. The film was not as bad as this type usually gets, but was poorly made. She looked great, though, and I hope she got a nice paycheck for it. (I bet Tim enjoyed it; my eyes certainly did.)

Linda Deneroff's question "Where do we go from here?" and Bev Clark's "What do we want from Lucas-film?" go hand in hand. On the first, personally, I am ready for the next trilogy to begin production. I don't think we need more films to keep fandom going, but I love the films and feel the quality will continue. Hopefully, GL is ready to begin work on them. He does not owe us these movies, not at all. But, I am hoping he wants to make them as much as I want to see them. If not, then the Saga should end here. Making the movies only to generate revenue for the Ranch would show up in the final product. The Saga should continue because Lucas

still has stories to tell in its framework. If so, he has the talent and ability to do so, and I'll lay down my \$ time and time again to see his films.

As for "What I want from LFL", if they continue what they've been doing, I will be ecstatic. That means more SW films, another "Indy", projects like LABYRINTH and HOWARD THE DUCK (which looks fascinating), the EWOKS and DROIDS shows are fine, ILM's work in the fx field, and everything else. I have no complaint with the merchandising; nothing I've purchased has been shoddy quality or unreasonably priced. I also am not complaining what they do or do not sell. The SW films strongly appeal to children, and I can see them gearing most of their products toward that market. Some products I do not buy, though; the comic for one. I was happy to see it discontinued, after having read several issues and skimmed many more, but never finding one to be even marginally passable. Perhaps it was just me, because, to dig up a cliché, several of my best friends read it. So, they obviously enjoyed some aspect of it. I do buy a lot of the other products, though. One line of items I would to see is of 8x10 stills, like so many dealers sell on a less than legitimate basis. I can appreciate the laws regarding how the actors would be owed royalties (etc.) but with the quality of the stills LFL must have access to, I'd gladly pay top dollar over what the hucksters charge. (Because of the laws, though, I don't expect anything to come out of this.)

On the other hand, I do not want LFL to branch off into more books. I've read far too many woe-fully mediocre pro-TREK novels to want SW to join the bandwagon. It is particularly the novelizations of the proposed other SW episodes I do not want. Those chapters I want to see as film, like the existing trilogy, and not read and wonder how they'd have looked on screen.

LFL should work on non-SW or Indy films to keep their creativity alive. One film I think they'd be able to turn into a masterpiece is a telling of the BEOWULF epic poem. (George, are you listening?) Lucas has every right in the world to continue building Skywalker Ranch, but he should not allow his dreams to become an unproductive, expensive think tank. That is not, I believe, what he wanted, and he should be careful to not let it become so. LFL's objectives should remain targeted on producing films and as long as they maintain the quality, the financial aspects will take care of themselves.

On another topic, the "new can of worms" Jenni Hennig opened last ish (about fan-fic), I feel an author has every right in the world to tell stories as s/he wants, and I'll argue to the death anyone who tells me I cannot. Dictating what can or cannot be written is like telling someone how to think. Fan fiction is a personal expression and a classic example of freedom of speech. It is no one's business but your own what you choose to commit to paper in the privacy of your own home. But...there is another question of rights involved here and that question arises when we speak of publishing an author's work for profit. (Note emphasis.) There, in the SW universe, the properties are owned by LFL (or GL himself, depending on how the company is structured) and it, LFL, should be the one to receive any financial rewards from its products. They are the ones who made SW a viable commodity by their work and risking of capital in bringing the films to the screen.

True, a fan author's work is his/her own creation in the largest sense, but we are still visitors in GL's world. If I saw a fan's book at the local

newsstand, advertised as a SW novel, I would lay down my \$ because of it being about SW, not because of the author. I have several favorite fan authors from my zine reading and would buy any of their pro efforts, be they SW or not, but only because of my knowing their work in the fan fiction arena. The general public (who do not read zines) do not know a fan author from any of the other hundreds of names on the shelf. They would not be able to judge before buying and reading the book whether the author is any good. Therefore, if they saw a SW novel on the shelf, they would invest their \$ because of it being SW, and not on the unknown merits of the author. How many of you had heard of Brian Daley before he wrote the Han Solo novels or of L. Neil Smith, who wrote the Lando ones? In general, I'd say most bought these books because of their subject and not the authors. They were licensed by LFL, and either the authors paid to use the characters and situations or were hired to do so (the latter probably), and LFL reaped the majority of the profits. That, I feel, is their right, because they made the commodity valuable.

Getting away from pro-fic to fan-fic, I do feel we should be allowed to put out fanzines (on the limited scale they now have). Zines do not hurt SW, if anything they help promote it. We are actually advertising for LFL--without pay. The reason we do it is because we enjoy it and as an expression of our appreciation for the Saga, and as long as it doesn't hurt the money-making potential of the films, I hope LFL will allow us to continue. (It would be a waste of legal fees to try and stop an editor who puts out a mere 200 copies of a zine and barely breaks even, never mind making a profit.) The question of violating copyright laws is not limited to making profits off another's work, as far as I understand it. It is also possible to be sued for damaging the original owner's money making potential. That is very difficult to prove, though, because you are talking about revenues not yet earned.

Well, I've surely said more than my fair share on these subjects. Onto others.

Carole Regine: Whether we agree or not, I'm glad we inspire each other to new ideas. Don't worry, you didn't step on any religious toes in the question on whether 3PO has a soul or not. You're right, my statement that droids have no souls was a personal belief (for lack of hard evidence), and the question IS still open. I do believe it is impossible for a mechanical to have a soul, but if anyone can dissuade me, I'll listen to any opinions, facts or theories.

Some evidence that I feel does support my belief is the fact that R2 was "killed" in ANH, but was repaired with no apparent change. (Note: I'm assuming he was totally disabled by DV's laser blasts. He looked "dead", and they seemed to think it was a major problem, so I think this is a valid assumption.) If he were "dead", then, would not any non-mechanical soul have left the body? To bring it back would then be a reincarnation, not the repairing of a mechanical device. The same could apply to 3PO in TESB.

There are cases of humans being "brought back from the dead" that have been well-documented, and could be used as evidence to support the claim that droids are equal to humans. I'm not that knowledgeable on this subject, but it seems that there is a different issue here than the restart of bodily organs.

Carole, you've raised some excellent points on

Yoda's and Obi-Wan's Big Gamble, especially that Luke was going to jump even before DV's revelation. I think they knew Darth would hold his tongue about being Luke's father until he had no other choice. My reasoning is similar to why Ben and Yoda did not tell Luke earlier. Luke's knowing DV was his father would not have made him open to the Darkside, no matter who told him. DV may have had to break Luke's spirit first during the duel before he could try to influence his mind. Telling Luke at the start of the duel (or at any point before he had destroyed his ability to resist) would have painted Darth as a liar in Luke's eyes. It seems there are shields around Force-users and during the duel Darth broke Luke's down and (ahem) forced him to open himself to the fact that he was his father. At any time up until then, Luke would have resisted and refused to acknowledge the truth of their relationship, as he indeed tried to do, but was too weak. (All of this is opinion, based on my interpretation of the scene, and everyone is free to agree or not.)

You are 100% right, Carole, that the Big Gamble ignored the possibility that Luke may not have had an escape. What would have happened if Luke could not have jumped is a great alternative idea for stories. I did not consider it myself in my last LoC, but my thoughts now that you've raised it is that it would not have changed Yoda's and Ben's decision to not tell Luke about DV being his father. If it had come to Luke having no escape (which would have been a real possibility), it would not have mattered who he heard the news from. Brought before the Emperor by Vader, I do not think Luke could have resisted the Darkside at that time--no untrained Jedi could have. Luke's gamble was in facing DV when he did not have mastery over the Force. DV had the cards stacked so high in his favor, the fact that he could claim being Luke's father was just one more wild card. Once Luke had made his choice, Obi-Wan's and Yoda's hands were tied and they could only give him the best help they could, no matter whether he was DV's son or not.

Carolyn Colledge: I don't think Han told Leia he loved her off-screen during TESB, but I love Pat Nussman's story (of him telling her as she slept) already--and I haven't even read it yet!

Thank you, Carolyn and Vonnie Fleming, for the praise and plugs for "Aftermath on Bespin." Much appreciated. Carolyn, your check is in the mail, and Vonnie, be looking for a 6'5", 265 lbs. black armored package in the mail. Ha! Ha!

Sorry to disagree with you Tim, but I think Harrison's changing of the line to "I know" was an improvement. The original struck me as (considering the plight Han was in there) as an empty threat.

By the way, I saw UNDER THE RAINBOW a couple of times as well. Carrie looked great in that role, too.

Ye Ed: I wanted to thank you for the return of the folded format, rather than the cut pages and staples (as in #10). I prefer the usual much more! ((Ed: So do I, but it is also more expensive than the standard and, depending on the old pocketbook, the cut and stapled version may show up more than once in the future.))

Also, I liked the illo of Oola on the page opposite my LoC. Maybe this time you could put one of Leia with my letter. (How's that for leaching, Tim?) I've also some questions about anagrams: is LoC pronounced L-Oh-See or as in lock? Also, Carol Mularski used FIAWOL and FIJAGH. I cannot make heads nor tails of them. ((Ed: People pronounce LoC both ways. I say "lock". "FIAWOL" stands for

"Fandom is a way of life" and is pronounced "FEE-ah-wol". "FIJAGH" is "Fandom is just a goddamned hobby" and I've never met anyone who could pronounce that!))

On a variation of Maggie's musical question, what kind of music would the characters listen to? Han, I pictured blasting CCR over the Falcon's speakers, as well as a lot of 50's rock. Leia strikes me as listening to Art Garfunkel (sorry, Paul) and classical. Luke, I haven't been able to come up with any ideas. Anyone? ((Ed: Maybe a little progressive country? On a related, but different, theme, we once had fun trying to picture what sort of car the characters would drive. Han was easy--a classic '57 Chevy (perhaps a la Bob Falga); Vader would have a wicked black Trans Am (or, alternatively, ride a righteously chopped Harley); Luke would have a dune buggy; Leia, a chauffeured white Lincoln Continental; Obi-Wan, an elegant gray Rolls Royce; and we thought it would be fun to picture Chewie stuffed into a beat-up red VW beetle!))

Kerri Smithline: You've raised a good question on whether clones have souls. I've always wondered whether a clone would share consciousness with the "original" or be its own entity. My own guess is that a clone would be like any other life form, despite its unorthodox creation, and its identical cell structure to the original would not necessarily mean it would not have its own consciousness and soul (all IMHO, though).

Sandi Jones: I may not want novels of the next SW chapters, but I'd trade my 8x10 still collection for a peak at GL's notes. The mental image I get is like the scene in CITIZEN KANE, when Thompson, the reporter, is going through the memoirs of Walter Thatcher.

In response to those who asked for opinions about the EWOKS and DROIDS series, they began well enough and I was happy with their quality, but I rarely watch them now. The first batch of DROIDS was excellent, but others were merely adequate. I do agree with most that they are much better than the standard TV fare.

Mark Hamill's AMAZING STORIES segment, "Gather Ye Acorns" was all right, but rather disappointing. The character did nothing to make his dreams into realities, instead he waited for riches to be handed to him. The story was technically well-executed, but I did not buy its message. The only other episode of the series I've seen (title? It was directed by Spielberg, and concerned a B-17 bomber crew) did not impress me at all. Aside from many gross technical errors, I felt the ending was a cheat on our emotions.

On the question about the "Star Wars" defense system, I hate hearing the title of the Saga associated with the SDI system. They are two entirely different things, and I wish the media would come up with something else.

Back to the droids issue:

Barbara Tennison has some excellent points on the possibility that droids may be self-aware, therefore making them "full persons". Very strong possibilities there. (I'd have mentioned this earlier if I could keep better notes.) On the surface, it appears I am contradicting myself, but I don't think so. There will be NO clear cut answers in this one. I think the questions of whether they have self-awareness/determination and if they have souls are not one in the same.

Pat Easley: I agree that Luke probably had to know he was falling to the Dark (thus the Emperor's

tauntings). Good points! On the "longing" look on Luke's face aboard the Falcon in TESB, my interpretation goes along with yours. You see him ("in part") struggling to reject his father. Mine agrees, but starts with that being where Luke first senses the good side (Anakin) beneath the shell of Vader. A link between them seems to have clearly been established on Bespin, and through this, I see Luke, for the first time, meeting his father. Darth opened the link, but by appealing to Luke as his son, Luke is able to reach back across and discover his father.

Thanks to everyone for another great issue, and apologies to all who I didn't get a chance to address individually. I'd hope to write more, but feared Cheree would cut me off for jumping from being a New LoCer, clear over BNF, and straight to BMF--Big Mouth Fan!

Ozzel A Rebel?

Pat Nussman
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April 28, 1986

Well, looks like I'm trying for the Under-the-Wire Award this time. But, truly, my tardiness is strictly unintentional--just creeping procrastination.

First, in keeping with my own suggestion a couple issues back, I'd like to mention a fan story which touches on some recent discussion in SE. Carol Hines-Stroede's "And He Is Us", printed in the newest GUARDIAN, does a really nice job of showing the possibility of a "Nuremberg Trial" situation in the New Republic--a subject that has come up in discussion several times since ROTJ. It's a very plausible explanation of how such a situation would occur, as well as how Luke and Leia would react and deal with it. And--even though Vader is dead here, as per mainstream SW--it's a rather nice Vader piece as well. I think it's a story well worth reading for its treatment of the unpleasant political realities attached to revolution.

Now, on to more general comments on last ish's letters.

Mary Keever: For the whole story on the Lucas-film porno flap, I suggest you borrow someone's old issues of JUNDLAND WASTES--as I recall (all too well) ((Ed: Pat was the editor of JW, for those who are new to fandom)), the subject was hashed through to the point of nausea in about three or four or more issues. You'll probably learn more about it than you ever wanted to know.

Matthew Whitney: On the subject of Ozzel--I'm not absolutely sure that incompetency was the only reason that Vader disposed of him. Right after TESB came out, Gordon Carleton (if my memory serves me right) wrote a fascinating vignette (published in WARPED SPACE) postulating that Ozzel was actually a rebel agent. And if you take a look at Ozzel's actions--trying to persuade Vader Hoth isn't worth looking into, bringing out the ships too fast--plus certain facial expressions, that is not such a far-fetched idea. In which case, Vader offed him for being a traitor to the Empire. Not a provable

theory, but I've always been rather fond of it.

Carol Mularski: On the subject of Ben telling Luke about his father. It's not so much the lie I object to--I can see where that was necessary. What I object to is that in ROTJ, Obi-Wan neither apologized nor really explained--he simply rationalized. I think a simple, "I'm sorry, Luke, but this is why we had to lie," would have been more honest and, frankly, more in keeping with Kenobi's personality as we saw it in ANH. This is not a put-down of Ben--he was my first crush when ANH came out--but a wish that that particular section of the ROTJ script had been different.

I'm with you and Sandi Jones about encouraging more people to contribute to zines--and just not as a stepping stone to "pro". I think sometimes in our desire to justify fanzines to the outside world we lean a little hard on the "preparing for pro-dom" aspect--almost making that the only reason for writing fan stories. More important, I think is to write fanfic because it's fun, because you can tell the stories you want to tell without worrying about what's selling this year, as professional fiction writers must. Don't get me wrong--going pro is a great goal, if that's really what you want to do, but I wonder why it seems so unacceptable (to outsiders and sometimes to fans, as well) to write as a hobby, for pure pleasure, rather than just as a means to eventually get money from it. ((Ed: A good point. Personally, I'd love to go pro someday and I feel that I'll know the day when I'm ready. I probably write well enough right now to make a stab at it--heck, I think I write a hell of a lot better than some pro writers...and that goes for a lot of fan writers!--but when I sit down to write a "for sale" story, I freeze up. I can't immerse myself in the story because I'm constantly thinking of what will sell and it shuts off the creative flow. I think a lot of fan writers probably suffer from the same thing.))

Sally Syjala: Liked your idea of Hoth being the Valley Forge of the SW rebellion. But I'm glad our heroes--unlike Washington's men--were apparently well supplied with footwear.

Vonnie Fleming: Enjoyed your remarks about droid personal development. I feel rather divided on the subject myself. Some computer enthusiasts I've spoken with feel that it's impossible to develop a droid with an independent personality such as we've been talking about--the point being that every "decision" made would be based on information fed in by the human programmer, so these decisions would not be those of the droid or computer or whatever, but actually a "by remote" decision of the original programmer. I'm not sure I agree with that--a lot of supposedly "impossible" things (scientifically speaking) have certainly come to pass in the last five decades or so (breaking the sound barrier, for instance), but it is fuel for thought.

Kerri Smithline: I absolutely agree that Luke and Leia's mother could well have been Bail's wife--there's nothing in the film to contradict this (adoption being mentioned in--I think--the non-canon novelization only). That is, in fact, the (as yet unwritten) background in my main SW universe and I noticed an Ellen Randolph story in the most recent GUARDIAN that utilizes that idea, also. The advantage to this (from my point of view as a Leia fan) is that Leia could still be a "born" princess of Alderaan, from her mother's line. ((Ed again--sorry to keep breaking in, Pat. A stray thought that crossed my mind is that it's possible that plural marriage was practiced on Alderaan. Luke and Leia's

mother might have been one of several wives of Bail Organa...or he might have been one of several husbands to her. And Anakin Skywalker might have been another! The possibilities boggle the mind!))

Lin Ward: Well, I can't claim to be an expert, but I'll put in my two cents' about LoCs as a sometime-editor and writer, as well as an occasional LoCer. I definitely don't think you need comment on every submission in a zine--with some (especially in these days of the fat zine) it would take more than than any of us could spare. On criticism: I think it's necessary, but I think it also should be as tactful as humanly possible--most writers I know (including me) are basically very insecure about their abilities, and may well shrivel if you come right out and call their characters cardboard. But I would think only the most touchy could get upset if you said something about wanting to see more thorough character development or something of that sort. However, I'll admit I tend to be cautious about criticism, myself, until I know how the person is going to take it--which is difficult in LoCs.

Carole Regine: I agree with you that Luke seems to have given himself further Jedi education. No fan story that I've seen (and I'll readily say my reading isn't all-inclusive) has dealt with the period between TESB and ROTJ from Luke's pov (or really much of anyone's) and I think it would be very interesting to see what Luke did during this period of time--because it's obvious that the man we see at the beginning of ROTJ is greatly matured over the Luke we see in TESB.

Marlene Karkoska: Good point you have about the lightsaber--though I think it could go either way. Or maybe even one of four ways. It could be a regular piece of hardware that is simply connected by tradition to the Jedi, it could be a weapon that only a Jedi Knight can make (as is suggested by Vader in ROTJ), it could be a weapon only a Jedi could use (as only Arthur can pull Excalibur from the stone in the Arthurian legends) or both of the last two alternatives. Any of these are possibilities, given the facts we're given in the films.

I completely agree on Bespin being a test for Luke in a different way than we had originally assumed--what kind of Jedi would he have been had he abandoned his friends? Personally, I would say Darkside with a vengeance.

I also (rather tentatively) agree with you about there possibly being a limited number of Force talents--at least, from what Lucas has told us. Yoda and Obi-Wan tend to throw around the terms "last Jedi" and "last hope" a lot--not even showing a tremendous amount of interest in Leia. On the other hand, since the Force is supposed to be in everything and everyone, perhaps there are other groups than the Jedi who have developed the ability to use the Force. The Emperor being a rather obvious example--he's mentioned in no one's game plane and may very well be from some other Force-using group. And it's possible that Yoda and Obi-Wan weren't training them because either they don't have the necessary skills to train non-Jedi Force-users or they don't trust non-Jedi Force users for some reason. From what we've been told in the trilogy, it's really difficult to say for sure who or what has the Force. Which is what makes fan fiction fun, since the name of the game there is possibilities.

Cheree: Interesting point you brought up in an editor's note--how did Han get involved with a scum like Jabba? I've only seen one fan written version of this--a very early Zeek story. It would be in-

teresting to see some other versions of how this came about.

Jeanine Hennig: I, too, have very mixed feelings on the bag of worms you cut open in your last letter. I would hate not to write SW fiction and interpret characters the way I myself see them. On the other hand, if someone took one of my own created characters and depicted her having sex with a turnip--well, let's just say I'd be very disturbed. I'm going to be interested to see the comments on this question.

Carolyn Gollledge, Jeannie Webster, and Editor: I can't close without thanking you for the nice things said about my writing. As I said above, writers are perpetually insecure creatures and it's always good to hear that someone is enjoying my work. Thanks.

First Letter

Sheryl Herrly
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April 26, 1986

Whew--I didn't think I was ever going to be able to get this letter typed! We've been rewiring, etc., etc., the whole house, and I simply haven't been able to get near the typewriter until now. I hope this makes it to you in time--but, if not, c'est le vie (I know I'm probably using the wrong article, but I couldn't find my 1st year French book--and besides, I like the sound of the phrase).

Who is Sheryl Herrly, you're probably all asking (no, well, you should be--where's your sense of curiosity?). Right, this is my first letter to SOUTHERN ENCLAVE! I had an earlier sub to SE, let it lag, and now am back in full swing again (school soon to be a thing of the past--at least for a while).

Liz Sharpe's "Clones" article was intriguing and thought-provoking. I never had really pondered the idea of why Luke's hand had been merely a bionic replacement instead of a cloned replica. It seems as if the inherent distaste and philosophical questions concerning cloning may not yet be resolved--something the New Republic had better thing about if they don't want the overwhelming pressures from within the Republic infrastructure to crack and crumble again--if, indeed, the clone question was a major stumbling block to the continuation of the Republic.

I'm afraid that I found the interview with Tom Voegeli to be rather boring and redundant. It seemed to cover mostly what is already general knowledge and was plagued with a multitude of "yeahs" and "okays."

The CHALLENGER tragedy left me with a profound feeling of shock and grief and the ultimate hope that we will best honor their deaths by continuing what they believed in.

After reading the articles on pages 16 and 17, I was left with mixed feelings. Certainly I don't

believe that Lucas "owes" us any new chapters, but it does seem as if production and release of subsequent chapters in the SW cycle might help alleviate some of the financial doldrums that he has recently entered.

Would you believe that I had never seen an episode of the Ewok/Droids Saturday morning show until a month ago? I must agree with Michelle Malkin that I believe the show is really above average when it comes to the usual children's fare offered. The Ewoks segment has a certain timeless magic about it; and, combined with what seems to be a consistent overlay of moral ethics, I would certainly welcome it above GI Joe, etc., for a child of mine to watch (if I had one, which I don't). The Droids segment is rather predictable and I can recognize the "punk" aspects that creep in--but the droids' friendship appears true in concept to the movies' portrayal.

Tim Blaes: Carrie Fisher as McCoy's daughter? I can almost see it...but not quite.

Carol Mularski: Media vs. SF fandom rivalry is alive and well here in Arizona, too...unfortunately. I really don't understand it. I first started reading SF when I was 7--the first story I read being "The Martian Way" in case anyone's interested. I fell in love with SF then, but it's been a continuing affair. This has never precluded me from enjoying such media fandoms as ST and SW--and, I see no reason why it legitimately should. ((Ed: Same here. One of my favorite books as a child SPACESHIP UNDER THE APPLE TREE, which I read repeatedly and have been looking for for years. I can picture the illustrations even now, but don't know who wrote it. But it was media sf--OUTER LIMITS, TWILIGHT ZONE, LOST IN SPACE, ST, and every sf movie ever made, no matter how bad--that led me into literary sf in my hunger for more. The first "real" sf book I can remember reading was CITIZEN OF THE GALAXY by Robert Heinlein and I was in the 7th grade. This was pre-ST and I didn't understand a word of it, didn't even know what a "starship" was! But the next year, ST debuted and I re-read it and went absolutely beserk over literary sf; I've been reading it ever since! And, by the way, CITIZEN OF THE GALAXY is still one of my favorite books; I've read it many times and I still enjoy it every time I pick it up.))

Sally Syrjala: Being a "Vader" fan, I enjoyed your premise of Vader as a double agent. Like Luke, I could "feel" the good in him, and your idea gives a sense of legitimacy to that feeling.

Speaking of Vader, my favorite fan conception of him is the series by Hines-Stroede. If anyone else out there is a Vader fan and hasn't discovered her writing yet, you're in for a treat--start searching. It's worth a look.

Vonnie Fleming: Pielt was one of my favorite Imperial characters (after Vader, of course). There was a sense of "noblesse oblige" about him. I, too, enjoy reading stories in which he somehow "survives"--and, if anyone is interested, THE SITH YEARBOOK/IMPERIAL ENTANGLEMENT #2 has several good offerings. If we were going to resurrect anyone in the SW universe, he'd get my vote.

Carolyn Gollledge: Concerning the validity of Luke rescuing Leia on the Death Star (and risking the droids falling into Imperial hands), moral reasons aside (but important)--perhaps only she had the proper recognition code (mentioned in SW radio episodes) that would prevent them from being blown out of the sky by the rebels before they could land.

Well, enough said for this issue. Until next issue, fly free in the Force.

Dr. Mary Urhausen
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April 28, 1986

Number 11 was the best yet! If the Fan Q Awards don't have a category for letterzines next year, it won't be because I didn't try; and if SOUTHERN ENCLAVE doesn't win, it also won't be because I didn't try!

Conspicuously or not, my letters have been absent for the last several issues of SE. It was not so much a matter of getting in under-the-wire--but of never even getting onto the track in the first place! Now I'm playin' catch-up. A few general comments on the last few issues: I have been very happy to see that the vitriolic tone has calmed down, and that a discussion of the issues and the vagaries of the saga has more or less replaced all the bitchiness and the name-calling. Good! This is where I came in! Specifically in #11, I think most of the writers have returned to the kind of speculation and dialogue that drew me to letterzines in the first place. Not that I don't like controversy; I can just do without all the attacks on people's intelligence, moral character and ancestry!

Another thing I noticed when I read #11: whether coincidentally or not, many of the letters were written January 28. Perhaps we all felt a need to communicate somehow with our fellow fans in the midst of all our pain. I know I was writing a letter when I heard the news about the CHALLENGER shuttle, and I don't think I will ever forget that day. The cover poem was particularly moving; thanks for including it, Cheree.

Now for my random comments:

Jenni Hennig: Hi, Jenni, you old worm-can opener, you! You and I have discussed this "whose fandom is it, anyway?" idea more than a few times, but I'll throw out a few more ideas anyway. Certainly no one can dispute that George Lucas created the original SW characters; and even if some rabid anti-Lucas factions seem to think that they could have come up with Han Solo or Luke Skywalker themselves, sooner or later, the fact remains that they didn't--Lucas did! But, is George "done with" his characters now? If he's lost interest, are they all a little bit more "ours" now? I think incidents like Lucasfilm losing its suit against the use of "Star Wars" to describe the SDI missile system have, in a left-handed, bass-ackwards way, enhanced fandom's grip on the SW characters for our own use. It's what we do with this control that determines, in my mind, the "rightness" of our "custody". Yes, George has kind of left all these guys orphans; we all seem only too glad to take Han and Luke and the gang under our wing--so to speak, of course! (Heh heh heh!) So let's treat them right! I agree, Jenni, that each time one of us writes about one of the SW characters we inevitably imprint them with a bit of our own persona. No matter how tightly we adhere to the canon, no two people's Lukes or Hans are alike (not to mention all the weird deviations that intentionally go on--like Ripley's virgin Han!). I won't repeat a phrase I have so often used in defining our responsibility to our characters' creator when we "borrow" his creations for our own use (it has to do with not mixing one bodily eliminatory function with an ingesting function, and therefore is not suitable for a PG letterzine!). Let's just say that yes, I think we have a "right" to borrow

these guys--but we also have a responsibility to take good care of them and do right by them when we use them. (Okay, Hennig, stop snickering! I know how you'd like to "use" these characters, you pig!) ((Ed: Another stray thought regarding "fan" versions vs. "real" versions of media characters. ST fandom has been around for an awful long time and Strekzines are as numerous as ever, a vast portion of them consisting of the K/S type stories and universe that were created in the hiatus between series and movies. I don't think there has ever been a problem separating all the fan adventures from the "real" stuff seen on the screen, despite the fact that there was a lapse of nearly fifteen years between the TV series and the first movie. Maybe we're making a mountain out of a molehill here regarding SW fan writing, as well. Perhaps, if the first trilogy is ever made, it will be like ST--no matter what we have written, George Lucas' version will always be the Real Thing, just as Gene Roddenberry's ST is Real STAR TREK. And, regarding the use of "Star Wars" in popular terminology, whether Lucas likes it or not, his characters and terms and universe have thoroughly permeated our culture and, despite hard-line copyright laws, there is an element of "popular domain" regarding them. And, after all, didn't Lucas say right off that he had set out to create a new mythos for our generation? So, now that he's succeeded, I don't think he has much room to gripe about it.))

Chris Callahan: Ouch! Point of disagreement! I come to the defense of fantasy fiction! No, I don't write it, but I do read it, and I dispute the assertion that it is "a threat" to SF, and that most of it doesn't encourage its readers to think! Frankly, I find the general run of SF available these days less creative and less inspiring than most of the fantasy. I exclude some of the witches & weirdos stuff, just as I exclude really bad SF; let's just consider halfway good SF and fantasy. People like Davis Eddings and Barbara Hambley write damn good stuff, even if it isn't SF. As for taking the plunge with an unknown author in either genre, frankly I feel a lot more confident taking a chance with a fantasy book than SF. Books like Hambley's DARWATH TRILOGY not only encourage thought, they require it. She raises moral and ethical and perceptual questions that do not magically resolve themselves. So, opinion to opinion, I disagree with you on this one.

Barbara Brayton: I just want to comment on your questions about the Lone Star Con panel with Maureen Garrett, since I was there. (As far as I know, no one got this on tape, did they?) Subsequent events, with the resignation of Ms. Garrett and the virtual dissolution of the OSWFC tend to bear out our conclusions on Lucasfilm and the fans. But I do wish to clarify that at no time did anyone attack Maureen personally. I'm sure she did feel on the defensive, however, since most of the fans were none-too-tactful in voicing their complaints about the way SW fans are treated by the hands that should be feeding them. (Kind of a case of being slapped by the hand that feeds you?) A lack of goodwill was noticeable--on both sides.

Bev Clark: This leads right into your question: What do fans want from Lucasfilm?? After attending tens of cons, and speaking with hundreds of SW fans, I think I can venture an opinion: Respect! Notice I do not say a handout, or a hand in decision-making, or even an acknowledgement of our contribution to the success of the LFL empire. They don't even want gratitude--all they want is some respect! I

realize that this is inherently a non-specific answer; sorry! I think the only way to can try to "specify" it a little is to give you an example of what I personally consider an example of respect. At the WorldCon in LA in 1984, after the Hugo was awarded to ROTJ for best media presentation, and while hundreds of fans were waiting in line for hours to see the first official screening of the SW trilogy, something very "respectful" happened. Howard Kazanjian walked the entire length of that line of fans, carrying the Hugo, stopping to talk, shake hands, and let people take photos. Hype? Crumb-tossing? Perhaps. But the fans really responded: someone gave them a little respect, instead of just whizzing off to the LFL fortress in a limo. In a way, I don't even think anything much has to be done to offer the fans what they want; it is more a question of attitude. It's the way the biggies at LFL act, the things they say, and the things they don't do that have distanced them from the fans in the past. And most fans are still so eager, so willing to believe, that I think it would only take a minute relaxing of Lucasfilm's posture (who's put the iron jockey shorts on most of these guys, anyway??!) for a vast improvement in relations to result.

And, on an unrelated topic, I agree with your proposal that perhaps Yoda really wanted Luke to leave Dagobah and go to Bespin to rescue his friends. I think several fans have advanced this theory, and I know some stories have been written about it. One that comes to mind is Karen Ripley's "One Thing and the Other" in FAR REALMS #7. I honestly can't imagine what kind of man or Jedi Luke could have become if he would not have gone to Bespin, especially since he realized that he was the cause of his friends' torture. And we all know neither Yoda nor Ben have been particularly clear in their motives throughout the saga!

Lin Ward: As both a zine editor and a sporadic LoCer myself, I found your question about the "etiquette" of LoCing very interesting. What etiquette?? No, seriously, I realize that many people find writing an LoC to a zine intimidating. Then there are the people like me, who swear as they read the zine that they are going to LoC it--ha. If it doesn't get done the minute you finish the zine, it seldom gets done at all! I am constantly amazed and thrilled at how many people LoC our zine; I don't know how they find the time and the motivation, but we love them for it!! There is no "right" or "wrong" way to LoC, in my opinion. Even if you just want to write to say that you liked/hated the zine in general; or if you just want to mention a story or two, or some art, that you really loved--that's a LoC (an LoC?). It's not necessary to comment on every story; it's not necessary to only say nice things; it's not necessary to give detailed reasons for your reactions. Some people write to say they hated something and that's it! Fine; how else would we know what our readers want? So, LoC away! There are no rules!

Just one more thing I wanted to throw in, since several people mentioned it. I, too, find I am ambivalent about the controversy about the use of "Star Wars" for SDI and Lucasfilm's suit. On the plus side, I realize that Lucasfilm's loss opens the door another few inches for fandom and zinedom in particular to get our collective feet into the door. But I heartily agree with the spirit of the suit. Whether or not you support Reagan's SDI, and I do not, I deeply resent the use of a term I fondly associate with other things to describe nuclear weapons in space. For that reason, I wish LFL would

have won. Some fans have argued that if I believe we have a "right" to use George's characters, I should therefore agree that the press has the "right" to use the term "Star Wars" for their purposes. Fair enough, I guess. But I still think SDI sucks asteroids and I think the use of "Star Wars" to describe it likewise sucks asteroids! So there!

Jedi Variations

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April 26, 1986

Hello, everyone! Cheree, you may have been late with #10, but believe me, your timing could not have been more perfect! Thank you! I have given up trying to keep my letter short! Sorry.

Liz Sharpe: Now I know what's been keeping you so busy. Your article concerning cloning was so thoughtful and detailed...my feeble mind was left in a mess! There is far too much to cover in one short comment. I agree the need to get rid of Palpatine has probably simply pushed the clone issue into the background. Peace will bring that problem to the fore again, and would renew conflict unless it was very skillfully handled...an interesting story theme.

Linda Deneroff: It seems to me that those comparisons of SW to "every piece of English literature" are not meant so much to prove or disprove the worth of SW, but rather to examine the recurrence in popular stories of easily recognized archetypes, and wonder at our fascination with them and the lessons they represent.

Mary Kever: That makes two of us who want to know about the "Slow Boat to Bespin" incident.

Michelle Malkin: I like your idea that Luke may start a variation on the Old Jedi Order. With his background of being denied access to his natural gifts, Luke will want to see some kind of across the board testing at an early age, the prime objective being self-realization, the second to serve the needs of that species and the Alliance in general. Possible outcomes/methods? (1) "triggering" other espers, (2) initiates sworn to be neutral witnesses, no matter their blood (?) allegiances, (3) some acting as legal representatives to the higher powers, (4) as a last option, enforcement of justice through a warrior code, (5) teachers, (6) sages, who would concern themselves with ethics and inner workings of the system. Thanks for the definition of a secular humanist; sounds like we could use more of that kind of thinking.

Matthew Whitney: I'd love to read IN A FAR AWAY GALAXY. Any idea where I could get a copy? I am not sure that Vader's treatment of Antilles classifies as torture. He died fairly quickly, and Vader seemed barely aware of what he was doing. I don't think Vader expected to get any information from his prisoner (if he did he certainly wasn't using a productive method!). Vader may simply have killed

him in battle lust. Very nasty, but not really torture. Possibly another demonstration to his troops of his immense strength? Vader wouldn't like the sniggering about his ex-Jedi background and belief in the Force. Maybe this kind of demo is his way of silencing his detractors. Ozze! may have been a suspected rebel agent, and I still don't think Needa was dead. If Vader was a blood-thirsty maniac, he would find command decisions difficult and his crews would desert by the shipload.

Tim Blaes: Hey, I like your abridged definition of a secular humanist too. You pinpointed what roused my curiosity with regard to Vader's actions toward the rebel shuttle. He knew who was on board, because Luke felt his presence and vice-versa. Perhaps Vader told Palpatine because he sensed Palpatine had foreseen this event, and would be aware of his betrayal if he didn't inform him. In that sense, Vader wouldn't be giving anything away either.

Carol Mularski: Hey, I admire your writing very much! Like the way you clarified the immense difference between mistake and sin.

Sally Syrrjala: Your thoughts on SF and media fandom were very well expressed and objective. More communication is good advice. I also wonder if Vader did not in fact "save" Solo by freezing him. I'm sure Jabba would have had a lot of "fun" with a highly animated, insulting Corellian. Even if the carbon freeze had killed Han, it could have been a merciful end by comparison. I never could figure out why Vader had to freeze Luke in the first place? Any takers? Seemed like the whole freeze bit was more to cover HF's contractual ambiguity than anything else.

Vonnie Fleming: Well, Von is my good friend, but I think I'm being unbiased when I say her letter contained a wealth of starting points for original thought. Enough to fill an article, and therefore impossible to cover here! Looks like the phone bill's about to skyrocket! Vonnie is being run off her little tootsies by Victoria's version of the slave markets, so she couldn't send a letter this time. She raises the pertinent point concerning droid sentience is not so much its existence but how it could occur. With or without human manipulation? Does this sentience then exist beyond "death", as would (supposedly) a human soul? At what point would a droid become self-aware? Would they all? All human babies normally become self-aware later in life, therefore they are granted the status before they actually achieve it. If not all droids achieve self-awareness, then an individual droid who did so would have great difficulty in claiming sentient status. As for reprogramming being a criteria for judging the lack of sentience, given the correct technology, the human mind could also be "erased" and reprogrammed. It is just as much a physical structure as a "mechanical" brain. Would a human being necessarily become a nonsentient, simply because he has a new response to a certain stimuli?

Kerry Smithline: A thought-provoking idea. I can just picture Palpatine and his coven of cloned Dark Jedi. Shudder time. If this were the case, Palpatine could have had some means of escaping bodily death. Vader would know of this and therefore make sure he did the job properly. If Palpatine was merely a clone or whatever, Vader would surely have informed Luke before he died.

Sally Smith: So where did your fit land?! Hey, at least Jack Nicholson didn't win!

Lin S. Ward: When do we get started on filling

in those gasps and doing our own tape version of ROTJ? I think it's a great idea! Vonnie reckons her "gaps" would be x-rated! (I wonder what George thinks!) As to Luke's going to the Academy, could it have been a neutral pilot training college? Was it ever stated that it was an Imperial facility? Could there be more than one Academy, having various political affiliations?

Oh...my contribution to the literary inheritance of mankind? CLCB turned out to be a fraud. I never signed with them, so NO ESCAPE is now looking for someone else gullible enough, er, genius enough to publish it.

Yes, Luke could easily have been compelled to tell Solo of the Skywalker version of DAYS OF OUR LIVES, while they were searching for Leia. Which brings me back to...could Solo's reaction on the walkway NOT have been jealousy but simply anger that she would not confide in him?

Carole Regine: Yes, self-castigation does seem to be Kenobi's thing. Well stated argument re "when should Luke have been told?".

Marlene K: I feel Luke's relationship to Vader made him the one and only choice. Anyone more "objective" could not have called Anakin back, thus completing the circle, restoring the balance and returning the Jedi.

Maggie N: Thank you for the SW fandom hierarchy. It's very comprehensive. Now who wants to tackle why people fall into opting for those various categories?

Sandi Jones: Congratulations on CLOSE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS!! I love its informal, family feel and the idea of it being an appetizer in between the heavy meals. Thank you.

Good summation of involvement with Jabba not necessarily meaning support for him. I'm sure Solo and other business associates wouldn't have wanted to see, and certainly not revel in, an execution. As for the band, is it possible that they were forced to be there? Jabba didn't take "no" for an answer when he wanted entertainment. ((Ed: Entirely possible. I heard a story recently about a singer who was very well known in the 50's who had started his career during the late 20's working the speakeasies. He played a gig for Al Capone then decided he wanted to move elsewhere. Capone sent a couple of his boys over to talk to him about it, in the process of which they cut off the tip of his tongue to prevent him from working for anyone else. He didn't either--for about 15 years!))

Bev Clark: Enjoyed your summation of reasons for varieties of people who could wind up in the Imperial military and their differing status post-peace. Agree with your description of Leia's flexible position within the Alliance hierarchy. Yes, Solo's rapid promotion also stunned me. Could there have been some of the Alliance Generals, Imperial defectors, who knew details of Solo's military background and possibly family involvement? Solo may also be an ex-Imperial officer. In this instance, his becoming a General is "full circle" for him. Agree that SW fandom is secondary to SW itself. I do not see that Lucasfilm owes us anything other than the right to enjoy his creation and express that enjoyment through fanzines/fandom.

Jeannie Webster: Touching summary of the "reaching out" of father to son and its true depth of meaning (possibly extending into Lucas' private life).

Barbara Brayton: Thanks for the reference to the Aztecs. Of course, you are right. I was looking at it from the POV that the Ewoks intended Solo

as a meal rather than a sacrifice. From a culinary aspect, their preparation seems a little strange, but as a sacrificial offering, it is plausible. But this was not made clear in the film.

Barbara Tennison: Ford and Bridges, me, too, particularly in JAGGED EDGE. Humans v. robots issue, judged by "can and will take responsibility for its actions". That would wipe out some humans!

B. J. Evans: Douglas instead of Ford?! Augh! Good point that if Deckard was a replicant, he was definitely an inferior model, but then Nexus 6 were very advanced. Still the creators of Bladerunners should logically cover that factor.

Chris Callahan: Loved your comments on SF books. Agreed 100%.

Jeanine Hennig: Vonnice wants to know why those undies weren't black! ((Ed: 'Cause they'd mistakenly been put into the "bleach" cycle in the wash!)) No, I don't think the SW characters can be considered ours, not if the essential criteria in our portrayal of them is to keep them "true to character"...a character Lucas created.

Liz Sharpe: (again) Artwork? I've always liked Dunster's. I'll be accused of favoritism, but Dani's is very "real" to me...Rebecca Carey's Lando guarding Han (WOOKIEE COMMODE #2) is superb, as is Carol McPherson's Luke on p. 34, and Karen River is another favorite.

Pat Easley: To me, Ben signals guilt a mile off in that scene in ANH. Reprogramming a droid? See earlier comments.

Lisa Thomas: You've owed me a zine since last September and failed to answer all my letters this year. I'd appreciate it if you pay what you owe in return for SKYWALKER #4.

Cheree: Thank you for the full verse of "High Flight". Many people here wanted to see the rest after Reagan's quote; you made that possible. It brought tears, but this time more of pride than grief.

Fan Writing

Chris Callahan
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April 28, 1986

Warning--I'm making this up as I go along. This should explain any lapses in coherence.

Linda Deneroff: In the SW universe, I get the impression a "droid" is a mechanical construct capable of independent movement and having some degree of programmed intelligence (it still bothers me to hear a mechanical object called droid rather than robot, but so it goes). As for the question of "rights" for various forms, I vote for rights for "natural" lifeforms and not for "constructed" ones.

Michelle Malkin: Your suggestion as to how Anakin was able to "come back" makes a great deal of sense, psychologically and in terms of the saga. As for the triads you've noticed--is this correspondence maybe one reason why so many Trek fan took to SW so immediately and completely? Not being a Trekker myself, I can only speculate. Why Hoppy and Zorro wore black...hmm. Suppose they were

"winters" and wore black because it looked good on them? Hoppy could even be one of the first "blonds in black" (even if his hair was really white; oh, well--it DID look good!). As far as your last comment--AMEN!!

Matthew Whitney: Your suggestions about Vader make sense. And how's this addition--Vader is getting impatient and losing his edge--not to mention some self-control. As for Leia on the blockade runner, my personal theory is that she was on official business that would pass Imperial inspection, as a cover for Alliance activity.

Tim Blaes: I always saw the OSWFC as a way to make money and to keep the myriad young fan (the consumers of the films, toys, comics, etc. but not fanzines) both happy and interested with the various paraphernalia--this would also help build an advance audience for other LFL productions. On secular humanism--ONLY Christian dogma? What about all the others? Personally, I chewed up the Christian and spat most of it out many years ago. Your suggested tabloid headline is truly gross, and I'd bet some rag would actually do such a thing if a publisher thought it would sell more copies! THANK YOU for the info on the Bloom County Fan Club!!

Carol Mularski: Thank you very much for dealing with that zine fan as you did. Personally, I never had any ambition to write professionally, and I consider myself a mediocre fan writer, but the experience has been invaluable in terms of personal growth and development. Putting down fan writing as "stunting" and otherwise unworthy of a person who has some creative ability has never made any sense to me, and it never will. Maybe it's an outgrowth of the overall attitude that anything done for money is good, anything done for love (or fun) is not (rather like the attitude that still prevails, that women's work in the home is worthless because it isn't paid, and that any job done primarily by women can't be worth much socially because it's low-paid--of course, there's the vicious circle problem here, too, but that's something else).

Sally Syrjala: Re ripoff films, have you seen ENEMY MINE? The last quarter or so of the film (NOT the novelization--that was fine!) was a blatant ripoff of ROTLA and TOD. And ruined the film for me besides, because it was such a total (and totally unnecessary) break with the rest of the film. The end of the novelization, based on earlier scripts, was far superior, and would have made EM one of the best sf films around.

Vonnice Fleming: I'm with you on droids. I like your theory about the "link" between Luke and Vader. And it would help explain why Vader didn't recognize Leia: ignorance on BOTH sides prevents a link from EITHER direction. Also agree with you about keeping Han separate from the family. Interesting idea about Luke's hand giving him trouble. Maybe the Emperor does something to prosthetic devices as a control, and this is how he's managed to keep Vader so subservient all this time.

Lin Ward: I tend toward the idea that Vader hoped for another chance at Luke and so let the shuttle land--after all, Vader's not going to give up easily, especially this close to the end! No, you're not the only one who hasn't seen LADYHAWKE--I haven't either. Liked the book.

Carole Regine: I agree with you about Yoda and Ben making mistakes rather than being malicious. After all, they'd both made big ones in the past! As for why the Emperor was so stupid as to turn his back on Vader--I think it shows his arrogance, making him overconfident that he still had Vader on a

short leash even after betrayal.

Marlene Karkoska: Re Han and the lightsaber--
THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

Maggie Nowakowska: Han finding Steve Martin standing outside the ship? What a gruesome idea! And yes, if you HAD to work in a cousin Han would hate to find, it'd be hard to come up with a better candidate for the part! Your chart of fannish interests is marvelous, a model of clarity and condensation. You should try to get it printed in all letterzines periodically! And I like your explanation of the virgin/power user idea. It certainly makes a lot more sense than a lot of the explanations I've seen, in fiction and out!

Carolyn Gollledge: I got the impression the Rebels didn't know about the Ewoks. And the novel does state that it was 3PO who got the Ewoks to join the battle.

Bev Clark: You've got some good story ideas in your speculations about the Empire's image in a generation or so. Just look at Vietnam for ways of seeing an unpleasant episode. As for what fans want from Lucasfilm--personally, what I want is recognition that we appreciate his work a great deal, enough to want to go into it in more depth even if he himself just wants to make action movies. We're COMPLIMENTING him!!! Though I've never been a Trek fan, I do think Gene Roddenberry has been much more gracious in accepting compliments than Lucas has been, and I salute him for that. And I want more films IF Lucas has solid ideas for them and real interest in doing them properly. What I DON'T want is something thrown together to capitalize on the interest of the fen but without the integrity--and love--that went into the trilogy. No more films at all would be preferable to that.

B. J. Evans: Good point about Deckard not being a very good model. Apparently Scott, et al, didn't consider this. However, is it possible he's an experimental model like Rachel, and lacks the usual strength (the replicants were designed to work under harsh conditions, remember) to make him better able to pass on Earth? If he's supposed to think he's human, he'd have to have no more than believable strength for a man his age, training, etc. I can imagine Tyrell planning a line of replicants for Earth use and setting out a couple as experiments to see how well they pass and yet do whatever job they're supposed to do.

Cheree: Love the cartoon at the bottom of page 55! Thank you for your news items and for the tributes to the CHALLENGER 7. I saw in the paper yesterday that seven asteroids have been named for them. The news that the cabin survived the blast is in a way good--it should encourage NASA to work out an escape system in spite of the problems of weights, etc. cited as reasons for not including one. Even if in this case it couldn't have been used (or, if automatic, would have only preserved the bodies because they died in the initial blast), it could save future astronauts. We know the cabin is stronger than expected, now it's time for NASA to take advantage of that fact.

Liz Sharpe: Your article on clones is fascinating and well thought out, as usual. I like some of your points about the pre-Collapse Jedi, such as that though well-trained in morals and ethics, they may not all make the same use of this training. The idea that they might have been largely a placebo is something I've never seen before, and very interesting. Your theories about the view of them taken by average citizens makes sense, and this is the first time I think I've seen several common sense ideas

laid out together like this. As for the question of "natural rights" and who has them, this is an old question in sf, along with the idea of clones. For some various viewpoints, check out Kate Wilhelm's WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG, Pamela Sargent's CLONED LIVES, a lot of John Varley's short fiction. As for the lack of biological repairs, the idea that the necessary skills have been lost makes sense. Altogether, the article is well written, logical and consistent with the films. Well done!

Zine fen have successfully united--UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR is on the ballot for the Hugo for Best Fanzine! Now can we stay united long enough to stuff the final ballot box? If this comes out in time, and you haven't voted yet, vote for UT for 1st place. (Carol, I hope your "correspondent" in zinedom knows what UT is and can eat his heart out!)

Airing Linen in Public

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April 25, 1986

Oh, dear, I'm so late with this! And I missed last time totally! But with moving and all, I've got some popular excuses, anyway!

I love the new logo. "High Flight" in memory of the CHALLENGER was beautiful. I appreciated the articles on this disaster that was so close to all of us, but especially "Challenger in Perspective", because this author says exactly what I feel, and tried to express to those in my circle at home who cried that the space program should be stopped. ((Ed: I felt the same way. In fact, I still cry each time I read this article. A few days after the explosion, my husband, knowing my years-long support of the space program, looked at me with a touch of skepticism and said, "Would you get on the next one?" With all my heart I answered, "In a minute! Oh, yes! In a minute!")

I enjoyed Liz's Clones article. I can't help admiring an author when they can present a historical background that is plausible from only a few sentences in a movie or book.

Ahem, "The PRIVATE Life of a Jedi". Well, Jenni, at least when you air your linen in public, they're sexy ones! (Hee)

I enjoy the pictures of other fen and so on that you print very much. I really got a kick out of the Jedi Security truck! The articles on GL were interesting also.

Mary Keever: I love Luke's black glove!

Michelle Malkin: Agree with you that GL could learn about fan relations from Gene Roddenberry. The man's wonderful, that's all there is to it! And if you stopped being a BNF, I sure didn't know it! So there!

Matthew Whitney: Liked the comment from Sagan's book. It describes the "hidden dialogue" thing perfectly.

Tim Blaes: "Rudolf Found in Meat Locker"?? Alright, how 'bout "Ronald McDonald Confirmed Vegetarian"?

Sally Syrjala: Good, someone who's willing to point out that Vader did several good things as well as evil in the trilogy. Everyone talks of wanting to know who Luke and Leia's mother is, but here's one who wants to know much more about their father! He's a complicated character, even more so to me than Luke, because we see why Luke reacts as he does through the movies, but we're left guessing even to the end of ROTJ, as to Anakin/Vader's motivations. Please, Saint George, make the First Trilogy!

Vonnie Fleming: Liked your comments on "the tily-white image of the Alliance". I also recommend SITH YEARBOOK as a zine that shows "the other side" in great stories and poems. I think the recent Libya events show this point up well. I keep comparing this with the Alliance and the Empire. Now, I don't want to get into a raging discussion on Libya. I just want to point out that, what Libyans see and hear is controlled by their leaders, as is also what we see. They call themselves "freedom fighters", the USA calls them "terrorists". Well, the Alliance and the Empire are the same to me. Another author who shows this up very very well is Carol Hines-Stroede. Her story in GUARDIAN 7 "And He Is Us" really brings this point across in connection with Luke and Vader.

Your points on Vader were good, and I agree.

Kerry Smithline: You're right; as Leia said to Han on the Falcon as they raced toward Yavin, "It's not over yet." The Empire was pretty big and I'm sure there are lots of other "Moff Tarkins" running around thinking, "Oh, boy, now that Hot Hands and Death Breath are gone, here's my big chance!"

Sally Smith: Thanks for being nice about my art. As I've said, Eds who write back to say, "Sorry" don't bother me, there's lots of reasons why, like the zine's full or it's not a piece that fits any of the stories, etc. It's just the ones that never answer that irritate me, and there's not too many of them.

Lin Ward: I'm a Who fan, too, and my next plate's gonna say "Who Dat".

Carole Regine: Great, another who admits Vader as a first draw to SW! Yes, that little bit ol' OB (at times I call him ol' BO, I get tired of him only telling what he wants and skipping the rest!) is very tantalizing! How Anakin re-acts to OB and Yoda and they to him on the next plane is a story I keep looking for! (hint, hint, you authors)

Marlene Karkoska: Actually, I'm a rabid Spock fan who's also a rabid Vader fan. Anyone figure that out?

Maggie N: Got a kick out of your "Fan-ly Tree."

Carolyn G: Hi there! Hope you got a copy of A NEW CHALLENGE by Ellen Randolph. It's great (can hardly wait for REVENGE OF THE SITH). I'm quite looking forward to your next stories, too!

Sandi J: Uh-huh! I'm sure I did all that talking during our "marathon" phone calls! Yep, it's Luke's story alright, but just think of this, no Vader, no Luke! So, be grateful, all you drooling Luke fans! (hee)

Bev Clark: I do so enjoy your letters; they give me the kick in the necessary area to go read some more and improve my mind (the Dr's bill for uncrossing my eyes is on its way to you!). (snicker)

Jenni H: Big Mouth Fan! Oh, boy, I l-o-o-v-e it! STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND is my favorite Heinlein book, so it can't be yours!! (See, I'm already a BMF!) As for your question, "Did anyone catch Mark Hamill on AMAZING STORIES?", go ask Sandi Jones. She'll catch Mark any way she can! (Ha, got

you, Sandi!!)

Liz Sharpe: First, I must say I was very pleased with your comments on my art, and with the company you put me in. Now, I will say that your story "Command Performance" is one of my favorite stories of 1985 (in SOUTHERN KNIGHTS I). Han and Leia are great, and Luke's just plain wonderful! The only problem with this is that now many of us will band together and lynch you if more stories don't appear soon! This is known as having a fan, so there!

Pat Easley: Hi! I'm not "post-30", I'm "under 100". Sounds better!

Last comments: I also like Judith's logo for "Mos Eisley Marketplace" and the cartoon on page 55 is great! To those I missed, hi, I liked your letters, too, but my hands (and my brain) are hurting, so I'll catch ya next time.

Media Portrayal of Fans

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April 25, 1986

During the 13 years I've been in fandom, I've heard many a fan complain about the way the news media portrays us. Let's examine this for a moment. When the first ST film came out, I and a few friends got in line at the theater early in the morning for the first showing, as did at least 100 other local fans. Everyone I could see in the line looked pretty "ordinary". That is, their (and our) dress was pretty mundane. There were no outstanding "weirdos". There were, however, two girls next to us. There were giggling loudly and wearing antennae. Now there's nothing wrong with giggling, being young or wearing antennae. But unfortunately, the media and the general public do tend to have certain prejudices. Suddenly a truck from Action News pulled up in front of the theater. Out came a reporter and two cameramen with their equipment. The reporter, a woman, mike in hand, came up to the line with a rather condescending expression and manner (everyone noticed it). Glancing at each person in line as she passed, she was obviously looking for something. She finally stopped. Where? Right in front of the two antennaeed gigglers, whereupon she set out to interview them. So. In a line of at least 100 people with undistinguishing, unsensationalistic features, she chose these two girls to represent us to the general public. Now maybe these two girls were perfectly nice, bright people, but the reporter's manner and questions did not let them show it. Many of us in fandom have seen this happen many times. So just exactly why do some of us get upset at this? Because the media, in their cynical, selective approach to coverage of fans, are basically prejudiced, as is much of mainstream society (those who know we exist, i.e.). The media are wholly ignorant about fandom. And they make no attempt to learn more about us, because (a) the way the system works, in-depth investigation and prior research are not the backbone of mainstream journalism--they are the exception to the rule. Indeed,

in the past few years former members of the media establishment have written volumes on the death of investigative, non-ideological journalism. Woodward and Bernstein were rarities, even in the late 70's; and (b) reporters in general are so sure of their assumptions about us (as they are about virtually everything they report), that they feel there's no need to understand the context of fandom. We of course have no input into how we are represented to the public (and by that I mean input, not control). So that what the public views is generally not truly us, but a filtered, distorted view, a caricature. That doesn't mean that there aren't "weirdos" in fandom, since (as Tim Blaes said) every stereotype has some truth, else it wouldn't work. What it does mean is that (and this is most important) the media don't generally pay attention to fans (we're hardly front page news), but when they do, their coverage is so distorted, so selective, and so unrepresentative, that many of us would prefer no coverage at all. (At a Philcon a couple of years ago, I saw a huge audience at the costume call reject TV coverage of themselves by shouting a reporter and two cameramen out of the room because they were generally being obnoxious. The attitude expressed by many fans in the room was, "They always treat us like creeps, anyway.") When we see a newspaper story or a TV report that breaks this pattern, we feel surprise and delight. Why? Because we want what everyone wants: respect. And thereby hangs a tale of stereotypes. Fans are understandably sensitive. But so are many other groups. Asians, Latin Americans, Arabs (as in BACK TO THE FUTURE's crazed Libyans), etc., are portrayed on film and TV in stereotypical situations. They are never thought of in ordinary circumstances. If, for instance, that reporter had at least (as a matter of course) interviewed other people as well as those two girls, then that would constitute fairer coverage. Instead, she instinctively zeroed in on the two girls and deliberately excluded out the majority. Because that's the basic problem: ignorance of context and complexity. A consequence of this is hostility towards the media, and often that hostility becomes extreme. But you see, mainstream journalism and popular art works so well because it is easier to distort and simplify. Not only for the media themselves, but for the audience, who generally want quick, simplistic descriptions and characterizations.

I'm aware of the article Bev Clark mentioned re A PASSAGE TO INDIA. Certainly the author was correct in condemning the latter more than TOD. A recent series of conferences held at the University of Pennsylvania sponsored by the School of Communications and the Departments of Anthropology, Sociology, History and Political Science examined popular characterizations of labor, Third World peoples, women, as well as the kind of general themes prevalent in films and TV during the Reagan era (something fan don't generally consider--that films and TV shows are rooted in the particular historical moment. TOD is definitely a Reagan-era film, as is BACK TO THE FUTURE, WARGAMES, etc., etc. SW itself could not have come out in the 60's or early 70's, and if it had, it probably would have bombed.) Social scientists and filmmakers from all over the world were there. Some of the bigger names were John Sayles, Haskell Wexler, Peter Weir, and Costa-Gravas (makers of THE BROTHER FROM ANOTHER PLANET, LATINO, WITNESS and MISSING, respectively). Two of the most interesting discussions were about the evolution (some called it a regression) of Sylvester

Stallone from his late 70's FIST (a box-office bomb, but praised as a mature exploration into American labor) to blatantly pandering films like RAMBO and COBRA, and a panel entitled "The Phenomena of George Lucas and Steven Spielberg", which I think many fans familiar with film analysis would have enjoyed. The discussion about recent films made in the Third World (TOD, GANDHI, PASSAGE TO INDIA, OUT OF AFRICA, ROMANCING THE STONE, and a lot more) appropriately consigned TOD as just another repeat of the 30's--50's characterizations, demonstrating how little has changed since then, and placed far more emphasis on more "serious" films like OUT OF AFRICA. Even while condemning, though, most participants said TOD's entertainment value was above reproach, and that its first half hour is probably one of the most (some said the most) exciting and exhausting moments in American film.

Tim Blaes: You make the chronic error of thinking sensitivity to racial/cultural characterizations means an unwillingness to tolerate negative portrayals of individual members or groups within a race or culture. The point is that the vast majority (if not 100%) of such characterizations are very few, and extremely skewed and unrepresentative when they exist. Your assumption that you know more about Colombia than a Colombian is incredible --in the literal sense of that word. Excepting a few British and Australian productions on public TV, Americans aren't exposed to any culture but their own. Colombians see U.S. TV and films, hear U.S. music, read U.S. literature, and buy U.S. products. Now certainly TV shows like I LOVE LUCY are hardly a complete picture of American society, but, as you said, aren't stereotypes based on some truth? And such stereotypical shows are, after all, made by Americans so we can only blame our own media. Third World societies, on the other hand, have no worldwide monopoly on film and TV distribution, so the world gets a view of such places not from the "horse's mouth" but from the distorted images inhabiting the minds of the American mass media.

Your comments on the US press demonstrates so well the results of a recent Gallup poll that states "There is no credibility crisis for the nation's media, because the great majority of Americans have a high opinion of newspapers, radio, television, and news magazines. The most vociferous critics of the media make up only 5 percent of the population --the best informed 5 percent." I could recommend studies, books, names, give you plenty of concrete examples where the media has outright lied, distorted and committed gross sins of omission--many criticisms come straight from the establishment press, as well as hundreds of journalism and communications departments throughout the country. The mainstream US press is simply not well respected worldwide. You can see it when you go on junkets with journalistic delegations to other countries. American reporters from the mainstream press (TIME, NEWSWEEK, NY TIMES, WASHINGTON POST, etc.) usually are the least informed, the most arrogant, and ask the worst questions. The worst are the people from CBS, NBC and ABC. While in Central America last summer, I saw how they mainly hung out in the hotels poolside and filed stories totally dependent on the US embassies while foreign journalists and American reporters/writers who don't work for the big name news agencies risked their lives, investigated accusations for themselves, and went to sources never mentioned in the US mainstream news. Several journalistic research think tanks in the US often publish what is called "Project Censored", an annual

rundown of the year's most ignored stories that got big press elsewhere (mainly in Europe, Latin America, Canada and the small press in the U.S.). Each year, the number of big stories that were totally ignored by the mainstream has grown larger and larger. And these stories are extremely germane to US foreign policy and domestic policy. There's no conscious conspiracy. It's just that the mainstream press' two biggest weaknesses--the cult of objectivity (which Tim faithfully parrots) and the profit motive get in the way. The Right's accusations about the press being liberal are generally correct--most journalists are moderates and slightly left of center. There's nothing wrong with being left or right or moderate or whatever. The problem comes when a press believes that it does not have its own prejudices, and purports to be a storehouse of "objective truth", because there is no such thing. I sometimes watch CBS and often read the NY Times and the local Philly paper, but not as my main source. You can't use the mass media as your major source of news because they explain nothing. No press can explain everything. But every press should readily, upfront admit its ideological leanings. There's nothing wrong in that. It's more honest, and helps the reader/viewer to understand where that particular press-organ stands. The Right says it wants the press to be more "balanced". Of course, what it means is that it wants the press to express its own views. Media researchers like Herbert Schiller, Erik Barnouw, reporters like Ray Bonner and Alan Riding, et al, simply want to eliminate this myth of objectivity and have the media be more honest about itself. Too many times there have been good reporters who have slowly learned that in-depth investigation and refutation of official government accusations are not rewarded. What happens (and this is consistent policy, not deviations) is that their stories usually get rewritten to "tone them down". So they deliberately file their stories "toned down" because they know that if they report what really happened, there's not much chance it will get published. This is why there's so much turnover as well as so much cynicism on the part of American mainstream journalists. There's an entire system of political patronage in D.C., for instance, that directly impinges on what the public reads, sees and hears. Of course, as journalist Arthur Miller (not the playwright) has said, "My own experience with the American big press has shown me that while all our informed criticism of it is based on an understanding of political and historical complexities, none of that reality is desired by the general public. Does the public want to be fully informed? With some individual exceptions, most just want to keep being confused." Quotations from PRAVDA are hardly sophisticated criteria for judging the merits of any press. The fact is that in annual surveys conducted both by researchers and mainstream news agencies themselves, in comparison to other Western industrialized nations, the American public is the most poorly informed. If you want specific documentation--write me privately. I've got a library full. I've gone on long enough.

I'd like to thank everyone who had good things to say about my article, and also Mary Schmidt a couple of issues back for complimenting me on my reviews. I don't know if she was altogether right in her assessment, because there have been reviews I've written that I wish had never seen print. But we live and learn. Liz Sharpe's article was excellent. A few comments: the article inherently accepts pro-Republican ideology. Fair enough. What

struck me was the direct identification of the Jedi as the crucial mechanism by which the Republic "worked." I am inherently suspicious of the OR as described by Liz. As she said, under normal circumstances, such a galactic government would be an improbable entity. I would go so far as to say it would be impossible. Even under the Empire, there is plenty of evidence that the galaxy was not under control (never mind tight control). I would also say that any centralized system such as the OR which, no matter how well-intentioned, tried to bring together such a disparate galaxy is inherently undemocratic (although to what degree is problematical, depending on the context). BUT--there was the Jedi. If Liz is correct, then, the Jedi were able to minimize this, and for an inordinately long time. How? The answer lies in understanding the very make up of the Jedi Order itself. The Knights were successful because of their Force abilities, as Liz indicates. If the Force is the very essence of all life, then the Jedi were much closer to the "truth" than any other enforcement body imaginable. But injustice--that is, the Dark--is just as "true" as justice. And if a Jedi turned wholly to the Dark, he or she could be responsible for horrendous abuses, being granted so much power by the Republican government. My question: what mechanism, if any, did the Jedi have to prevent Darksiders within their ranks? The survival of the OR hinged on the continued strength and goodness of the Jedi. What, for so many years, maintained that?

Also, every system changes, nothing remains static. To expect the Republic to last forever (just as the Alliance expects the New Republic to go on forever) is naive. Assuming the truth of Liz's interpretation of the clone wars for a moment, if it hadn't been clones, it would have been something else eventually. My guess is that ultimately the OR just became too cumbersome and unwieldy. And also, following GL's "corruption from within" model, as it grew, its ability to represent constituents became extremely limited. And that definitely relates to the Jedi. If enforcement of fair representation was one of the Jedi's duties, then the OR's ultimate loss of that ability may have been a result of some weakness with the Jedi. This could have stemmed from the clone controversy--but Liz is unclear as to how long she thinks that debate went on. She also characterizes it solely as a political danger, a "debate." Wars get started when something endangers material conditions. I don't know exactly how she envisions the clone debate, but I would see it this way: clones were introduced as a breakthrough as a labor-saving device, increasing efficiency, output. They may even have been considered as a police force. The implications of all this gradually came to be felt. This, coupled with the scenario Liz paints in her article, together would have formed the causes of the clone wars. But this would have been going on for decades at least. Ancient governments don't fall that easily.

The problem I have with Liz's article is that she characterizes to OR's enemies merely as "malcontents", troublemakers, without legitimate complaints or aims. That's political caricature. The basic problem is that the OR simply lasted too long. There came a point when it began to stagnate. When systems begin to stagnate, they are resistant to change, which creates violent opposition and overthrow, and often a very undemocratic replacement. A larger problem (not in Liz's article) is the assumption that it is possible to restore the past. Some-

one in the last issue asked how future generations would view the Empire. Often future generations think of past systems in caricature. Thus the Alliance's idealized image of the OR, in contrast to its image of the "horrible" present, the Empire. Doubtless historians of the future will wrangle it out. One thing historians are good at is demonstrating continuity, so that the foundations of the Empire were laid in the OR, just as the foundations of the New Republic were laid in the Empire. The Alliance may want to restore the OR, but it will find that an impossible task. You can't change history--and you can't ignore the fact of the Empire.

Comparisons

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April 28, 1986

The deadline is rapidly approaching for SE#12 and no words have yet to be set upon the chopping block for inclusion within its pages. Therefore, it seems tonight is the night to remedy such short fallings.

Linda Deneroff brings up the topic of comparisons. I know that I make comparisons with the SW trilogy to help to locate the common thread which runs through all things. SW used in this way can almost be looked at as a mantra of sorts. If you concentrate on it long enough, it might just reveal some basic universal for which we all seek. Literally nothing stands truly all on its own. All things are interconnected with each other and different experiences have an effect on people and events down the line which might not be recognized as being unless looked at in depth.

In this light, I see the learning of history as a way to try to bring current events into focus. For all are part of the same common fabric. Trying to determine the pattern it all creates is the challenge. Trying to meet that challenge is one of the reasons I like to compare SW with other entities. No man or event or thing is an island to its own self. We and all else are somehow interwoven into the same reality and we all affect one another. To try to understand that reality which we share, it helps us to understand in what manner we are linked to one another. After all, "It's the fundamental things of life!"

Then the question of what makes beings "eligible" for rights. To me a being is "eligible" for such things simply because they are. Then the problem becomes one of determining what makes a being a being. Would artificial intelligence be called sentient? And when does that "artificial" quality become "natural"? Would the ability to think and act on the thoughts so created constitute a being? Would it get down to if a being had a soul? Who would then define soul and what would it constitute? Ah, the questions of theology which technology is inventing!

Michelle Malkin brings up the point of Anakin being "tricked" into evil. Again, the theme of "from a certain point of view" can come into play. Anakin could have thought that he was taking the only path which would lead to peace within the galaxy. It could be that originally the Emperor also was motivated by thoughts of "good", but was corrupted by the power which was wielded. This power could have blinded them to the way which they originally sought and shed darkness over the entire scheme of things.

The views on the various ST characters as compared with the SW ones were interesting. It all goes to show how we incorporate our own feelings and views into the characters and how they take on subtle differences under the interpretations of those views.

Bev Clark brings up the question of what fans want from Lucasfilm. "Respect" may be but an abstract and not specific, but it is the prime ingredient which Lucasfilm lacks.

It can be said to exhibit many small forms which, when taken as a whole, comprise the nebulous creature we are seeking in the essence of respect.

A simple element such as allowing others to exist can be brought to play in this equation.

Too, Lucasfilm is representative of the Empire in the manner in which it tried to "rule" the fans. It tries to control them and lead them on the Lucasfilm Fundamentalist path. It is a statement of "my way or no way". This strikes me as antagonistic and egotistical.

We all have our own ideas on how we wish to express our interest in a particular subject matter. Story ideas are not something which can be channeled into one passage way only. They flow of their own accord in all directions. Ideas are like that. Once released, they have a life of their own. They refuse to stay confined to a narrow field, but seek to roam the stars and find their own place in the scheme of things.

Lucasfilm tries to restrict this flow of ideas. They treat the fan in a condescending manner. A pat on the head for "the good little child" is how I see their concept of fandom.

Indeed, Gene Roddenberry has treated ST fandom in a much different manner. He has far more respect for the fans. He seeks their input and listens to their ideas. He knows that fandom is a compliment to both him and his creation, not a threat. He is secure enough to realize this and the fact that fandom can be a definite aid to him.

Fandom is the experimental laboratory for ideas for a continuation of the product.

If Lucasfilm cannot grasp the concept that we exist simply of and by ourselves and for no other sinister reason, it is sad. We simply seek to extrapolate upon the ideas which have been put into motion through the SW films.

Lucasfilm has taken on the image of the Empire. It represents something which is ruled from on high by beings who find mingling with the common people to be something repugnant to them. One can imagine the remark "Let them eat cake" coming from their mouths. They would as soon see fandom squashed as anything.

Far better if they realized the potential in fandom for a continuing market base for their product.

Too, fandom is a good public relations sector. Here are all these people pushing the SW product for love and not money. There are not many products which can boast of such a thing! Such an asset

should be capitalized upon and not treated with the contemptuous indifference which Lucasfilm exhibits.

Respect is an abstract quality and as such it is difficult to pin such a concept to mere words. However, a lack of respect takes on the form of many small things such as writing down to people in the Lucasfilm Club Newsletter, considering fans to be something to be merely tolerated at best, but more to the liking of Lucasfilm, terminated.

These are a few of the things which have led me to an image of Lucasfilm as an unfeeling empire that cares naught for the people who made it what it is--the fans.

Well, this night has nearly made it into the next morning. Therefore, these words need to be put to bed! For now...PEACE--It's Disarming!

Don't Drink and Drive

Carol Peters
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April 15, 1986

I have a couple of things that have been bouncing around in my head for a while. I saw EMPIRE before I saw STAR WARS and ever since then one thing has bothered me. When Han is leaving the cave to go find Luke, one of the rebels warns that he will freeze before he reaches the first marker and Han replies, "Then I'll see you in hell." Then in STAR WARS, Owen makes a reference to hell also. Has anyone else been wondering what hell, where hell, whose hell? These are the only two references to hell that I have come across but it intrigues me as to what others think or read into these mentions of hell.

The other thing I would like to hear some ideas, thoughts or rumblings on is also from EMPIRE. What do you think was the significance of Luke seeing his own face when the severed helmet cracks open in the cave? Do you think Luke saw it as an omen that he might become as evil as Vader? Maybe he was fighting himself. Or what???

Cheree, this last bit is on a dark note but I hope you will find it worthy of print. If any of you reading this thinks that they can have a drink or two then drive, I hope that you DON'T do it. I have just spent the last year in and out of the hospital while the doctors tried to put me back together, all because of a man who only had two beers after work before he drove home. It has been the worst time of my life. I lost my marriage and almost lost my life because of a drinking driver. PLEASE DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE! ((Ed: Drinking and driving is the leading cause of death in America today, yet those drivers are given light sentences or sometimes set free by indulgent judges and juries. Meanwhile, the victims of drunk drivers lie in graves or hospital beds, and families and lives are shattered, with no recompense at hand. It's time to let our lawmakers know that we've had all we're going to take. Contact your local chapter of M.A.D.D. to find out what you can do!))



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April 29, 1986

I hope that this letter makes it in time. I'd hate to wreck a perfect record. This is the very first letter I'm writing from my brand new address all of five blocks away from the old one. After living at my old place for 12 years, it's taking some adjusting to get used to this one, but the improvements make it all worthwhile (like a postage stamp-sized room I call my "library").

I'm so glad that you chose the poem "High Flight" to commemorate the CHALLENGER Seven astronauts. This has been a favorite poem of mine ever since I first heard it in an Air Force commercial. Before, I've always felt like crying simply from the beauty of this piece and the knowledge that I would never achieve the feeling of the pilot who wrote it; now, I do cry for the seven who died trying to achieve their goals. They tried, and my heart goes out to them and the ones who will follow, as I know they must and will.

Liz Sharpe's article on clones was interesting and well thought out, as her articles always are. Her point about the Old Republic's downfall being caused by something as "simple" as progress is a good one. After all, look at what educating the masses did to the old aristocracy right here on Earth. The Industrial Revolution caused a mass movement of population from the country to the city which still hasn't entirely stopped after nearly two centuries. The effect of such movements on religious, philosophical and political thought is immense. I imagine the creation of cloned slaves would have the same effect on such thought in its effect on both the labor market and ideas of morality.

Jenni: Didn't you forget the "s" at the end of the second word in your article's title? Tsk.

Linda Deneroff: People compare the SW trilogy to Arthurian legend or Doc Smith or whatever because it's fun to imagine its roots. We all know that GL is fascinated by history, mythology, philosophy and

old movies (gods, he almost sounds like most fen), and this shows up in his SW movies. No one is saying that the trilogy isn't capable of standing on its own because of such comparisons. They're just having fun. (STAR TREK is almost a direct steal from Doc Smith, but who cares. It's what Roddenberry did with ST and what GL did with SW that counts.)

Mary Keever: First of all, I am very jealous that you have a Luke doll. A friend and I raced each other to a huckster table selling the very last Luke doll I've ever seen on sale. I lost. Sigh. Does anyone know where I can buy a Luke doll without having to give up my life savings? Hmmm, good idea about Jedi children being trained from even before birth. Hopefully, once the new Jedi (or whatever they call themselves) are established, anyone who wants to will be able to have their child, pre-natal or otherwise, screened for possible training. About the "Slow Boat to Bespin" incident. You missed the entire Lucasfilm flak incident! This was when either GL or some representatives possibly speaking in his name (it was never made entirely clear) tried to tell SW writers the kind of stories they could or couldn't write. The stories in question had a little bit of what might be called graphic sex in them (one of them, anyway). Someone at LFL read them and flipped. (Actually, this was caused by a totally graphic Swedish story that was written for the express purpose of upsetting people. Writers in the USA suffered as a result of a copy of this story, "The True Force", having been sent to LFL just before "Slow Boat" came out.) Anyway, the results of all this was that several fen ended up at each other's throats over whether or not we had the right to write the kind of material GL or LFL might object to. The matter was never settled. Two major results of this was that a lot of people became scared to write stories that they might have, while others simply got angry and told LFL where to get off (I'm in the latter group). "The Holy Sisters of Luke's Black Glove"? I love it!! Just like Michael Jackson's fans wore jeweled gloves on one hand, Luke's fans can wear one black glove! Hah!

Michelle Malkin: Did you really say in your response to Lin Ward on page 21, halfway down the second paragraph that Luke was aware of his psychic abilities? No, no, no, Michelle! He was unaware of them until Ben took him under his wing and started to train him. Shame on you! (Don't hit me, Cheree. I talk to myself all the time. As long as I don't answer...)

Matthew Whitney: The kind of peer pressure men have to put up with when they stay in media fandom past a certain age sounds just like the kind of pressure women are still being faced with when they decide to be sf fen at all no matter what their age. At least it isn't nearly as bad now as it was when I was growing up. Hopefully someday some people will learn to stop looking down on other peoples' interests for sexist or any other kind of reasons. ((Ed: Now, if I could only get my mother to stop telling me I had to give up my "books" and scrub my toilet instead! Sheesh--some people need to get their priorities straight!)) As to Vader's killing of Ozzel being a mistake--I wonder. Maybe Ozzel wasn't killed due to incompetence. Maybe he was a rebel spy, and Vader was just waiting for an excuse to off him. As to Needa's knee bend not having been noticed and left in the movie for that reason: it's there. That's enough for me. Music favorites: early Kansas, late Styx, Beatles. Then there's always Gershwin, Bach and Tchaikovsky. Lots

of others, but these are my biggies. Current favorite is Mr. Mister due to their strong orchestration and balance of sound (i.e., the music doesn't drown out the lyrics).

Tim Blaes: Why should Sandra Necchi or anyone else have to "lay off our press"? The same Constitution's Bill of Rights that guarantees us freedom of the press also guarantees us freedom of speech (which includes the written word). I agree that our press probably is the best in the world, but the right to criticize it is part of what makes it so great.

Sally Syrjala: At first I was pretty upset that Lucas had lost his case against the government using the term "Star Wars" to describe one of the stupidest defense ideas to come down the pike in this or any other century. Then, when I stopped to think about it, I realized that this could only work in the favor of SW writers and artists should LFL get antsy again about what we can or cannot publish. So, I'm very glad that LFL lost. Damn near ecstatic, in fact. As to your comparison of the SW Rebellion to the Revolutionary War--Huzzah! Fantastic comparison and one I'm ashamed that I didn't think of myself. I wonder if any Imperial supporters in fandom would have been Tories had they been alive at the time of the Revolution. About the animosity genfen feel toward mediafen--hopefully when they realize that we aren't a threat to them and that many of us belong to both fandoms, they'll cool off. I don't tend to worry about it very much because anyone who looks down on my personal interests has an icecube's chance on Venus of becoming a friend of mine.

Vonnie Fleming: The more I think about it, the more convinced I'm becoming that Anakin was a full Jedi when he fell. But, if he had already been influenced toward the Dark before completing his training and there weren't enough Jedi of the proper type or training to realize this, his Fall would be more understandable. Your comments in reference to the article "Question Authority" hit the nail right on the head. By demanding control over fan's rights, LFL is doing nothing more than alienating its biggest fans. Then again, we can live very well without them, since SW already exists.

Kerri Smithline: Hey, if the Emperor was a clone of the real thing, does that mean that Blake was a clone, too? Oops, sorry, I'm crossing universes again. Actually, I don't care if Blake was real or not. Avon and Tarrant can lead the gang very nicely on their own--if they don't kill each other first! (For those who are wondering what I'm babbling on about--all this is from the British sf series BLAKE'S 7. Good show! It's about an apparently unsuccessful rebellion against an Empire-like government. The fact that the two main characters are nearly always in various stages of insanity may have something to do with their lack of success. And they're the good guys!) I don't know if Buddy Hart metamorphosed into Corey Hart, but Corey Hart's resemblance to Harrison is downright frightening! About artificial insemination--if the SW universe was up to the technology that made clones possible, then they would have been able to preserve both Jedi sperm and ova. In this way, a surrogate mother could carry a completely Jedi baby. Oh my garsh, another story idea!

Sally Smith: Grow up in the mundane way? Never! I'm with you, kid! "The Ten Lost Tribbles of Is-rael"? Har! My tape collection includes AN AMERICAN IN PARIS, SAN FRANCISCO, PIMPERNEL SMITH, BLACK FURY, THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL and ATTACK OF

THE KILLER TOMATOES (so don't be surprised if I break into a non-rousing chorus of "Puberty Love"). And, of course, anything I can get my hands on that Harrison was ever in! Like Cheree says, some parts of my collection may be pure crud, but my main criteria is that I like them. (The original LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS is a crud classic made in a week or less. When I found a copy for ten bucks, I grabbed it.)

Ummmm, uh, Cheree, before I forget. Here I write a nice, friendly, pleasant letter (last issue) and what do you pick as its headliner but "Brainless Deviants". I'd better watch what I say in this one. I tremble in anticipation. Uh, oh, I can see it now--"Pure Crud!" (see above) or even "Crud Classic!" ((Ed: I think you lucked out and got an illo this time, but I'll remember that for next ish.))

Lin Ward: What to do with the clones left over after the war? For one thing, if the stormtroopers are clones and only know war, they would probably have to be separated from the rest of the population if there is any way to tell that they are clones. If they're trainable and undetectable, they could be slipped into the general populace a few at a time. If they're both untrainable and detectable, another world would have to be found for them and protected from outside invasion (totally isolated, in other words). If the clones can't reproduce, they would die out in a generation or two. If they can reproduce (we haven't seen any female clones, but that doesn't mean that they don't exist,) then some way would have to be found to educate the youngsters so that they could eventually be allowed to rejoin the rest of the Alliance. It's a serious moral problem, given the circumstances mentioned here, and one the Alliance may have to face.

Carole Regine: Dark Chewbacca tale? Brrrr! Sounds like something out of Lovecraft. I don't know if I could ever write the story the way I had it in mind. It was absolutely vile. I'd have to give it some pretty heavy thought. How did Ben and Yoda welcome Anakin into the fold of otherworldly Jedi? Well, first they kicked him right in the ectoplasm, then they forgave him.

Marlene Karkoska: I completely agree with what you said about letting the writers of outstanding stories know our thoughts on their writing. In fact, I'd even go so far as to say that a story should be praised simply for how much it is enjoyed, not just how well it is written. Three SW stories I've enjoyed many times over the years are Maggie Nowakowska's "Last Flight of the Millennium Falcon", "Little One" by Lisa Adolf and "Metamorpheus" by Ellen Blair. I like everything I've read by Anne E. Zeek, though my favorites by her are "Honor Binds Me", "Revenant" and "Skyfall." I've never read anything by Pat Nussman that I haven't liked. I love Jacqueline Taero's funny little rhymes and every poem I've ever read by Susan Matthews and Pat Nussman. I loved the Cori Beckett stories up until the last one in Moby Pegasus which made me sick to my stomach. Artists I enjoy for various and sundry reasons (they're all so different) are: Debra Drake, Wanda Lybarger, Jean Kluge, June Edwards, Nancy Stasulis, Cathye Faraci, Martynn (even without backgrounds. Sigh.), Stefanie Hawks, J. R. Dunster, and many others. My favorite cartoonists are Yvonne Zan, Leah Rosenthal and Suzy Sansom. I know that listing my faves here doesn't make up for not writing to the zines I've seen their works in over the years, but hopefully it will be worth something. Hmmm, ideas on why Luke's last name was not changed

--how about Yoda knew that history could not be changed until the point where Luke became involved in the Rebellion (every timeline Yoda saw up until then, or maybe there was just one, was the same) at which point it would become necessary for Vader to know who his son is (though, apparently, things changed a little faster than Yoda expected).

Maggie Nowakowska: Ya know, now that both you and Tim mention it, I've never been able to imagine myself as Han's love interest, either. I even made up a Mary Sue of my own, then was never able to figure out where to use her in a story. Probably the reason for this is that I simply don't belong in the SW universe, and if I try to be a Mary Sue, she eventually turns out to be someone else who does belong there, and she isn't me anymore.

Carolyn Gollidge: Congratulations on your book sale! I owe you a letter from way back. Maybe now that I'm settled in my new digs I'll have time to catch up with all the people I owe letters to. About the Ewoks having had contact with the humans in the SW universe before, I think they must have. I'm certain that Wicket said, "No!" to Leia at one point in their first conversation. It would be one hell of a coincidence for the Ewoks to have the same word for "no" as the humans (in whatever galactic speech they use). If humans had visited Endor sometime previous to ROTJ, among the first words the Ewoks would have learned from them would have been "yes" and "no". Also, so what if Yoda was crabby? Like you say, his terseness could simply be part of his character or personality. I love his sense of humor, and that is one point no one has touched on. I agree with you about Marquand being a twit. His abysmal directing almost ruined ROTJ. If only it could be made over again with Kershner as director. Where was Lucas' brain the day he hired Marquand? You're supposed to go forward with character development, not backwards! I doubt that either Lucas or Marquand will ever understand this. Damn! But then, as Sandi Jones says in her letter, if you want SW stories with any real depth, read fanlit!

Bev Clark: I wonder if the non-humans were part of the Old Republic. It's an interesting idea. What do I want from Lucasfilm? Right now, outside of possible future movies, not a darn thing. I'll gladly leave them and their movies and SFX and new young directors and technicians alone, as long as they'll leave me and my writing alone. My writing SW fan fiction has nothing to do with them. It doesn't rob their pocketbooks, but it does give them plenty of free publicity. What I mean by respect is respect for my right to write what I please and to develop my talents as I please and not to be threatened by big moneybags lawyers. In return, I won't take their money from them, I'll continue to spend my money on their products, and I will ask for them to respect my rights as an individual if they expect me to respect their rights in the same way. In fact, they would make me very happy if they just ignored SW fandom completely. I sincerely hope that they will make more SW movies in the future, but the pure and simple fact is that we don't need them anymore. We can write them ourselves.

Gods, I've run out of space to write and there are still nine letters left to comment on! B. J., I'd like to have Han, Luke and Leia as friends, too. They're all basically good people and I'll bet they'd be very interesting to talk with. Liz Sharpe, good response to Jean Stevenson. Lisa Thomas, yep, different sets of clones.

Cheree, thanks for another great issue.

Lisa Thomas
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April 23, 1986

Hello, all! SE#11 was great, as usual. I love the new nameplates! They look great!

So, any news on OSWFC? I never joined (gasp) so I have no way of knowing if they're disbanding (in case I ever finally get around to joining) except by someone in the club. At least the International Brotherhood of Jedi Knights has decided not to give up. Lucasfilm was giving them a lot of pressure for a while.

All of this talk about SW zines dying down is depressing! Other than the obvious reason for buying SW zines, I buy them for a tan! MediaWest is conveniently placed right before the summer so that my copies arrive by the start of the season. Zines keep me out in the sun long enough to actually get some color (the color was red last year after FAR REALMS #7, though!). Anyhow, I don't think the interest in SW fandom will ever completely die--especially with folks like me who hope to take a stab at playing zine ed when time permits.

I must say that I was disappointed somewhat with the ROTJ video. The scenes where, at the theater, you see both Luke and Han on the skiff at the same time, are shown switching back and forth on the tape and it drives me crazy! One of my favorite scenes is when Luke and Han are reunited. "How're we doin'?" On the video, Luke is off-screen as he replies, "Same as always." I always loved the look on his face as he replied. I'm just being picky I guess, but I want it the same way I saw it May 25, 1983. I guess I'll just have to go buy a large screen and projector.

Mary Kever: Uh-huh, I see where you've got your paw on Luke, and that wicked grin on your face... I'll bet he set you back some. The '85 ST/SW Price Guide lists him around \$100. (By the way, has anybody found a 1986 edition of the price guide? I'm still searching.)

Michelle Malkin: "Unimportant brainless deviants"--I like that! Your reference to Arnold Stang was long on me. How close to 40?

Matthew Whitney: We think alike--the same thought went across my mind as I read that line from Dr. Carl Sagan's CONTACT. I also agree that the book is fantastic!

Tim Blaes: "Han's frozen assets," huh? I will never believe there was no pun intended there!

Sally Syrjala: Your comments on SW/Revolutionary War were very interesting.

Vonnie Fleming: I think that the mindlink between Vader and Luke had always been there, but Luke wasn't consciously aware of it until he was told that Vader is his father.

So when and where is this Ewok barbeque?

Carole Regine: A-ha! The first few times I saw ESB and Luke would say, "There's something familiar about this place," I would just say, "huh?" Your idea of his being there with his mother and Leia is very probable, but I have to disagree with your statement that in ROTJ both Luke and Leia have vague memories of their mother. Luke says just the opposite. "I have no memory of my mother. I never knew her."

Marlene Karkoska: I never really thought much about Luke keeping the Skywalker name before or the potential threat it posed. As you said, you could always go back to Marcia Brin's theory that Anakin

and Darth are two separate people; therefore, neither Ben or Owen expected to Luke to be in danger at the time that Owen took Luke in. However, by keeping Luke from joining the Academy, Owen obviously had some fear of Luke being endangered if he were anywhere but the planet farthest from the "bright center of the universe." I guess that since Ben knew that Luke's destiny was to eventually face/confront Darth Vader (I don't dare say "his father" since that is so touchy), he decided to let Vader find Luke when the time (as decided by Ben and perhaps Yoda) was right. There was no reason to shelter Luke Skywalker as long as he was kept on a short leash. Does that make sense? Hope so!

Carolyn Gollidge: Well, by now you should have finally received the "special delivery" I sent--though it took forever for me to get it to you. Again, I'm really sorry that it took so long!

Unfortunately, EWOK EXTERMINATOR T-shirts are not easy to come by. I had mine custom made.

Bev Clark: Very interesting insight into Yoda.

Jeanine Hennig: Your "Private Life" series gets more interesting with each issue!

Liz Sharpe: Thanks for a great article on clones! It gave much insight into the clones and clone wars, and it answered a lot of questions I had.

Pat Easley: You mentioned the scene in ROTJ where Luke's words, gestures and lip movements are out of sync. That has always bothered me, too, but the most obvious (one that Lucasfilm should have corrected in the editing room) is when Han is trying to help Lando back onto the skiff. The skiff suddenly leans to one side and Han slides off--just grabbing on with his hands. The next second he is hanging by his feet. What an acrobatic move!

Yea! I have actually read the entire issue and finished by LoC a week before the deadline! Could a pattern be developing here? Well, clear skies!

