



ISSUE 34

WINTER 1993

## **DARK EMPIRE REVIEW/ANALYSIS (Dark Horse Comics)**

Mary Jo Fox

In 1990, I heard about a new post-ROTJ comic book series "soon-to-be-published" by Marvel. For nearly two years I searched for this new series, but to no avail. At last my prayers were answered when Dark Horse's *Dark Empire* #1 hit the stands in late 1991. Throughout 1992, I anxiously awaited each issue, wondering just what was going to happen to our heroes next.

The artwork in this series is incredible. The brilliant cover art by Dave Dorman is always the first thing that captures the reader. The man will win an award for those covers, if there is any justice in this universe!

On the inside, we have Cam Kennedy's art to admire. He is a true master at drawing the complex machinery of the SW universe. It's amazing that much of the hardware (the World Devastators, the Emperor's flagship, etc.) came not from the movies but from Kennedy's own imagination. The battle scenes are all spectacularly done with incredible detail. I shudder to think how much it would cost to reproduce some of those scenes for the big screen.

The use of watercolors gives the whole series a strange, foreboding atmosphere, especially the scenes

on Byss. Some people may not like that some characters don't look too much like their cinematic counterparts, but I was willing to overlook that. Kennedy does a great job with the droids and the Emperor.

For the most part, Tom Veitch's script is incredible. This story, like the films, deals with a metaphysical battle that is reflected through space battles. The question Luke Skywalker tries to answer over the course of the series is, "Can you defeat darkness through darkness?" He learns all about the Dark Side from the reborn Emperor, who in turn seeks to turn the young Jedi Master or destroy him, whichever happens first. This scenario is shocking, to say the least. Veitch keeps us guessing where Luke's loyalties lie -- one minute he's helping his friends escape, the next minute, he's using Dark Side powers (ironically, to help his friends).

The various subplots involving the battle at Calamari and the rescue attempts are engrossing, without taking away from the heart of the struggle. The supplementary information in the back is fascinating, especially the passages about the ancient Jedi. Veitch has created wonderful new worlds, from creepy

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Byss to garish *Blade Runner*-esque Nal Hutta. He has also created some great characters, my favorite being the enigmatic Vima Da Boda. She had better be back in the next series! Some folks may not like that the Emperor and Boba Fett have been brought back from the grave. But I never thought a guy as tough as Boba could die so easily and the way the Emperor is brought back is kind of clever.

Luke, Han and Leia remain the same gang we know and love, but they show some growth as well. Now that they're thirty- or forty-somethings, and in some cases, parents, we *should* expect some changes. Han seems to have accepted the responsibilities of being an Alliance general, a husband, and a father. But, he's still a wiseguy who has trouble accepting the Force. As everyone keeps telling him, "You just don't understand." At the end, he expresses some pride in being the father of Jedi. That heart of gold keeps getting shinier, too. For instance, when he and Chewie are escaping from a detention cell, he actually says, "To heck with the *Falcon*! We aren't leaving 'til we find Leia!" Han sacrificing his ship for his woman?! He *has* come a long way!

If there's one thing that's abundantly clear, it's that Leia is definitely the smartest and most fearless SW character. Right away, she sees that Luke's plan is a lousy idea. She outsmarts the Emperor and recaptures the holocron. She charges from adventure to adventure, never minding the fact that she's pregnant. Her Highnessness has changed in some ways, too. She has completely accepted her Jedi heritage. She seems proud that her children are part of that tradition as well. As a result, she demonstrates far more confidence in her Force abilities than she shows in Zahn's books. (Oh, she starts to wear black in Issue 6, too!)

Luke, however, is at his most intriguing in this story. We see just how far he has come since ANH when he coolly blows up at AT-AT with a mere gesture. He seems so much older now and ever so alone. Luke says he decided to learn about the Dark Side to see why Anakin fell. But, perhaps he thinks he can single-handedly defeat the Dark Side, since he had successfully faced it alone before. He's still reckless, touched with hubris that nearly causes him to fall into darkness. Luke's demeanor changes from moment to moment -- on one page, he seems to be under the Emperor's control, on the next page, he seems to be still loyal to the Rebellion. Up until the end, we don't know which path he'll choose. It's a Luke we haven't

seen before, but it's a refreshing aspect of this story. Somehow, it makes his struggle more believable now that we have seen such vulnerability, even though he is a Jedi Master.

There are various mythological/mystical themes in the story as well. The most obvious is the continuing conflict between Good and Evil. But the most interesting point Veitch makes is that the Jedi were powerful because they could pool their Force powers. The solitary Dark Side users are no match for a unified community of Jedi. Luke learns to think of himself as part of a group, not as a lone warrior who has to save the galaxy all by himself. Did, then, the Jedi of the Old Republic fall because they lost that sense of community? It's an intriguing idea.

Another interesting development is the Emperor wanting to take Leia's third child (three is a magical number!) as his new body. Oddly enough, this reminds me of Anne Rice's *The Witching Hour*. In that novel, an evil entity invades the heroine's fetus so that he would be born human. It's sort of a perversion of the Christ figure. The Emperor, an evil entity housed in a cloned body, wishes to be "reborn" into a body that will make him human again. Not only will he be invincible in a powerful Jedi's body, but it is implied that he hopes to be part of a Dark Family that includes Luke as a subservient "son" and Leia as a surrogate mother. He is a lonely being trapped in a chaotic world of anger, hatred and fear without companionship since Vader's death. Also, if "positive" Force is stronger if it is shared, then the converse must be true. However, the Emperor is doomed to fail. He is quick to anger, and he craves power and control for only himself. In the end, he is destroyed by his own hatred (at least for now).

Veitch's story has a few flaws, particularly in #6. The battles are resolved just fine, but there are two scenes in particular that could have been better. I think the scene where Leia leaves to go face the Emperor is too short and unemotional. Compare that with the carbon freezing chamber scene in TESB or the scene in ROTJ where Luke leaves Leia to face Vader. Those were real heart-tuggers. Veitch didn't have to make a five-page sappy affair out of that situation, but he had a chance to make us shed some tears and he blew it! The very last scene is a bit of a letdown, as well. It's basically a "Jedis Only" ending. All three movies ended with the cast standing together to symbolize the solidarity of the Family. An all-cast ending here would've renewed that Family bond. It

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would've shown Luke is part of the fold again. But we are short-changed with an ending scene that is not as emotionally satisfying as it could have been.

Overall, *Dark Empire* is true to the spirit of the SW films. It is an impressive series that everyone who considers himself or herself a fan should be required to read. The good news is that Dark Horse promises more SW goodies in 1993, including a *Dark Empire* sequel. Can't wait!

Best Issue: #3 -- the most spine-tingling.

Best Cover: #2 -- I'm not a Luke Luster, but, boy, did he look good on that cover. #3 and #6 are my honorable mentions.

Best Line: From #3: Han says to Leia, "If he's [Luke] such a great Jedi, how come I have to keep rescuing him?"

Coolest Technological Wonder: The World Devastators. Big, scary, and ecologically efficient!

Most Shocking Revelation: You don't have to wait for Zahn's third book to get the names of Leia's twins (Jacen and Jaina).

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Deadline for #35 -- March 1, 1993 (which is, incidentally, my 40th birthday!)

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*Submissions received later than seven (7) days after deadline will not be published in the current issue.*

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## AN EDITORIAL RESPONSE

Cheree Cargill

I want to thank everyone who commented on the editing controversy. I appreciate your ideas and feelings. I have thought about it all a great deal and herewith is my response:

I have been editing fanzines for twenty years, since 1972. In that time, I have published nearly 50 zines -- five issues of *Tal-Shaya* (a Star Trek zine), six issues of *A Tremor in the Force* (with a seventh and eighth in the works), two issues of *Field Studies* (with a third upcoming), two issues of *Choice Parts*, and thirty-four issues of *Southern Enclave*. In addition, I was co-editor for approximately six issues of *A Piece of the Action* (a Star Trek newsletter), and had a regular column for around four years. *A Tremor in the Force* issues #1-4 were nominated for Fan Q's for Best SW Zine. *A Tremor in the Force* #5 won the 1990 Star Award for Best SW Zine. *Southern Enclave* has won 4 Fan Q's and two Star Awards as best SW letterzine. In my "mundane" life, I hold a Bachelor of Arts with a second major in English literature. I have worked professionally as a legal transcriptionist and word processing specialist since 1979, and I read obsessively for study and pleasure. I have never claimed that this makes me a professional editor, but I think this gives me a pretty good background for being an amateur one.

During the span of those twenty years, I have had the pleasure of working with some of the best known writers in SW fandom (some who have gone on to write professionally), some writers who flared briefly and then followed other interests, and others who contributed occasionally with modest but heart-felt works. And, during all that time, I found myself on the receiving end of only a handful of minor complaints.

However, for the past six months, I have been bewildered and angry at having to defend myself when I thought my reputation in fandom spoke for itself. And, frankly, I have been hurt and deeply offended that my personal integrity has apparently been called into question.

A. G. Steyn, in her remarks to me in this issue's LoC, says that I refused to carry on the discussion "under the table" but insisted that I would only do so in SE. I'm afraid that she must have misconstrued what I said to her. She had insisted that I reprint unedited versions of her stories in TF#7 or in SE. This was something that I refused to do, but I offered her SE's public forum to make any sort of public statement she wished, giving her *carte blanche* to blast me to kingdom come if she chose and I promised that I would not edit, censor or rebut a single word in that issue.

I have done a great deal of thinking during the past several months and discussed the situation privately with several other zine editors -- including an editor in an unrelated fandom -- to see what their thoughts were, as editors. And, it was with this in mind that I asked last issue for your opinions on editing stories and the duty owed by an editor to an author and vice versa. The responses received this issue have been thought-provoking and sobering, to say the least.

The problem seems to have two prongs. First, there was obviously a misunderstanding on A. G.'s part. The fact that her story would be edited and not printed verbatim was apparently a surprise to her. With the help of Z. P. Florian's European point of view, I now understand that such is not the usual case with European fanzines. I still feel that A. G. overreacted in her initial letter to me concerning this, but I also overreacted in my response to her and regret that my reply was not a more temperate one, and thus aggravated a volatile situation.

Second, however, is the larger question of the actual editing process. I have always tried to edit with a light hand and leave any rewrites to the author. However, I feel that it falls within the purview of an editor to make such changes as grammar, punctuation, slight sentence restructuring and perhaps even an occasional word change, if the editor feels it improves the flow and readability

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of the story. I believe that this is the editor's job; she is ultimately responsible for the quality of material that is offered to her readers. Otherwise, she is nothing more than a typist. However, it has never been my intention to rewrite any author's work. I try to read each story with an objective eye, as a first-time reader would see it, and mark any editorial changes I think are warranted. If those changes amount to anything more than what I call "polishing" (as outlined above), it goes back to the author for a rewrite. I have never thought it necessary to negotiate endlessly over this, but, by your letters in this issue, you have all made it clear that *you* do. I will admit to being surprised by the vehemence on this issue and will take more care in the future.

In the case of the story vignettes by A. G. that I printed in *A Tremor in the Force* #6, I just flat out failed to follow through properly on them. The deadline for getting the zine to the printer was coming up fast and I had a lot of things on my mind. Thus, I neglected to send the edited versions back to her for approval. With 20-20 hindsight, I realize that I should have done so or held the vignettes out of that issue until everything could be worked out. But I didn't because I was rushed and doing final layout on the zine (along with my usual dozen or so other activities, like working full time and maintaining a home and family, as well as getting out an issue of SE and handling a heavy load of correspondence), and it simply didn't cross my mind.

Therefore, I hereby formally and publicly apologize to A. G. Steyn for the misunderstanding and miscommunications we have experienced over this matter. And I formally and publicly apologize to everyone who has ever submitted material for any of my zines if I have offended you in any way with my editing practices.

Your comments in this issue of SE have made me more conscious of your feelings and I will henceforth try to work more closely with all my contributors as well as mailing "galley proofs" of all final printouts back to the authors for proofing and changes. I hope this will alleviate any more hurt feelings in this matter.

However, if I have not made myself clear over the years I have been doing zines, let me put it in unequivocal terms:

**Every piece of written material that is submitted to Falcon Press for publication is subject to being edited!**

Now, this doesn't mean that I'm sitting here with a blue pencil and a maniacal leer on my face, waiting to slash and burn your creation into tiny pieces. You need only talk with people whose work I have published many times to know that I don't do that. However, when you send a manuscript to me for possible publication in one of my zines, I *will* exercise my experience and read it with a critical eye. I have seen very few manuscripts in those twenty years that were letter perfect both in content and form. It's my job as editor to catch the inconsistencies, to point out the holes in the plot, and to help you, as a writer, make your story as emotionally satisfying for the reader as I can. I feel very strongly that I am ultimately responsible for whatever material I choose for publication in Falcon Press zines and it has always been my credo that any zine that goes out under my name will be the very best zine I can produce.

Fiorenzo Delle Rupi, in his LoC this issue, expresses his belief that an editor should just print what he is sent and let the readers decide whether it is good or bad. I disagree. The readers are laying out cold, hard cash for the zine and I believe they deserve the best product I can give them, particularly with the high price of zines these days. I feel it would be dishonest of me to do otherwise.

So, once again, I apologize to anyone I may have offended with my editorial practices, but I stand by them. If you have a problem with your work being edited or if you feel that whatever you have written was brought down from on high, carved with fire in tables of stone, then don't send it to me. We are not likely to have a happy relationship. In such a case, you are free to submit it elsewhere or, alternatively, to do your own zine and publish whatever you want any old way you want. The more zines, the merrier!

I'm sorry this editorial sounds so belligerent but this matter has struck close to the heart. And the bottom line is this -- I will stop doing zines altogether before I will lower the quality of Falcon Press publications. And you can carve *that* in stone.

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### ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY...

Southern Enclave #2, December 1983; 42 pp.

LoCers: Kathy Agel, Terri Black, Tim Blaes, Marcia Brin, Danaline Bryant, Bev Clark, Melody Corbett, Linda DeLaurentis, Debbie Gilbert, Kathy Godfrey, Jeanine Hennig, Christine Jeffords, Bev Loreinstein, Michelle Malkin, Susan Matthews, Pat Molitar, Karen Osman, Carole Regine, Sally Syrijala, Barbara Tennison, Leticia Wells, and Ann Wortham.

Art by: Danaline Bryant and Cheree Cargill.

Article: "The Other Chemistry" by Melody Corbett. Concerned allegory and symbolism in the SW Saga. Referenced Joseph Campbell's *Hero With a Thousand Faces* as well as other books on mythology.

Also Featured: Word Search Puzzle by Lynda Vandiver.

LoC Topics Included: SW merchandise such as the Pepperidge Farm cookies and the Buena Vista juvenile records; comments on ROTJ, both pro and con; Luke and Leia as siblings; Han and Leia's future; and "canon".

Zines Advertised: "Currently in Port" -- *Combining Forces* #3, *Conflicting Impulses* #1, *Details at 11* (Simon & Simon), *Encore!* (Mel Gibson), *Fans of Ford Newsletter*, *Far Realms* 4-5, *Field Studies* #1, *Harrison Ford Fun Book*, *Masiform D* #13 (ST), *Outland Chronicles* #1, *Scoundrel*, *Shooting Star* (Mark Hamill), *Tales for the Telling* (Raiders), and *We Are Star Met* (ST). "Coming Soon" -- *Archaeology 101* #3 (Raiders), *A Tremor in the Force* #1, *Collected Circle of Fire*, *Conflicting Impulses* #2, *Contraband* #2, *Deceptive Journey*, *Legends of Light* #2, *Outland Chronicles* #2, *Skywalker* #5, and *VHF--the Lyrics*. "Other Worlds" offered Martie Benedict's VHF tapes, costumes made by Chris Jefford's mother, several zine sales, soft fannish dolls (unicorns, sehlats, etc.), solicitations for donations towards stars on the Walk of Fame for Harrison Ford and Leonard Nimoy, and Harrison Ford stationery.

### CREW ROSTER

Mary Jo Fox

Age: 23.

Occupation: Law Student.

Favorite song of all time: "Love Will Tear Us Apart".

Favorite album(s) of all time: *The Queen is Dead* -- The Smiths, *Treasure* -- Cocteau Twins.

Weirdest rumor that has been spread about me: I was a devil worshipper (not true, of course!!).

Favorite color: black, black, and more black (even lipstick and nailpolish!).

How did I ever become a SW fan: When I was a wee lass of 7, almost 8, my parents got me out of school just to go see ANH (a "doctor's appointment"). I was hooked the second it splashed across the screen (and have been since!).

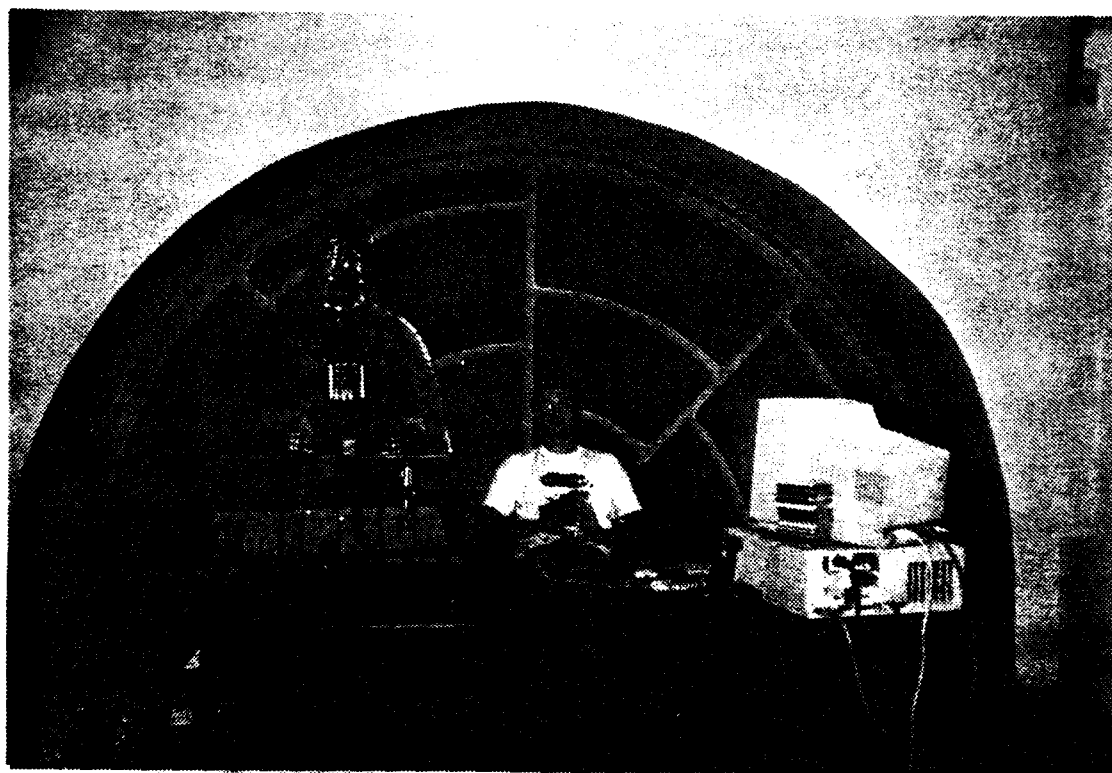
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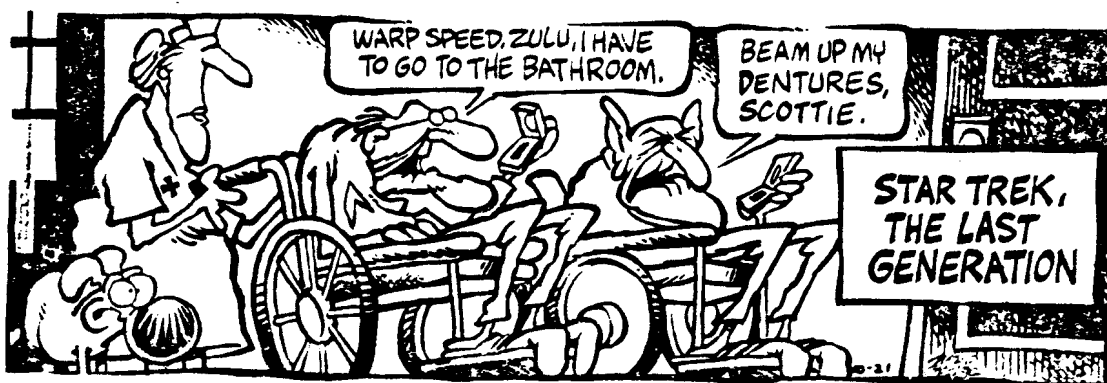
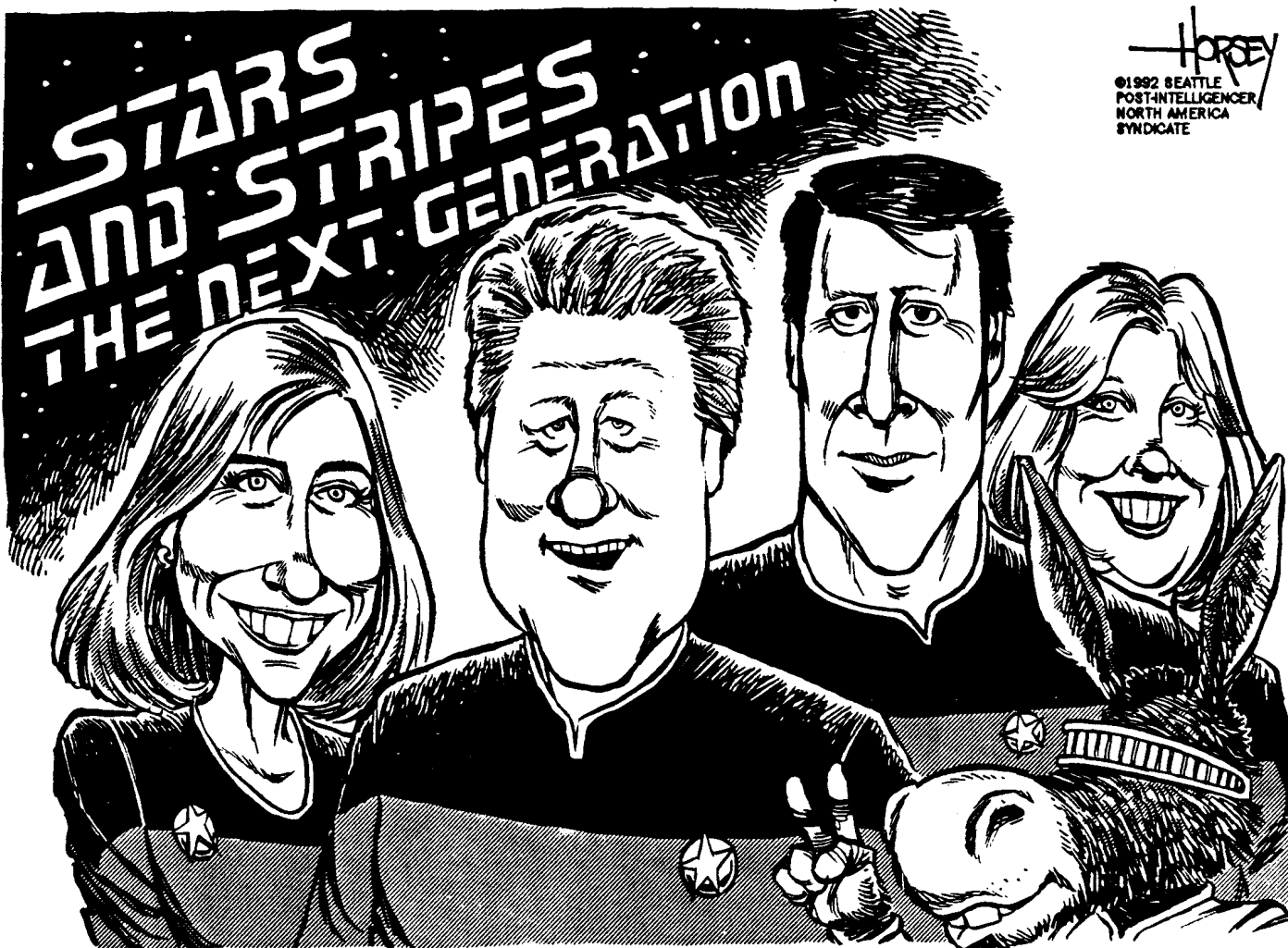
Thanks to Debbie Kittle, Maggie Nowakowska, Tim Blaes and everyone else who sent clippings. I wish we could print them all!



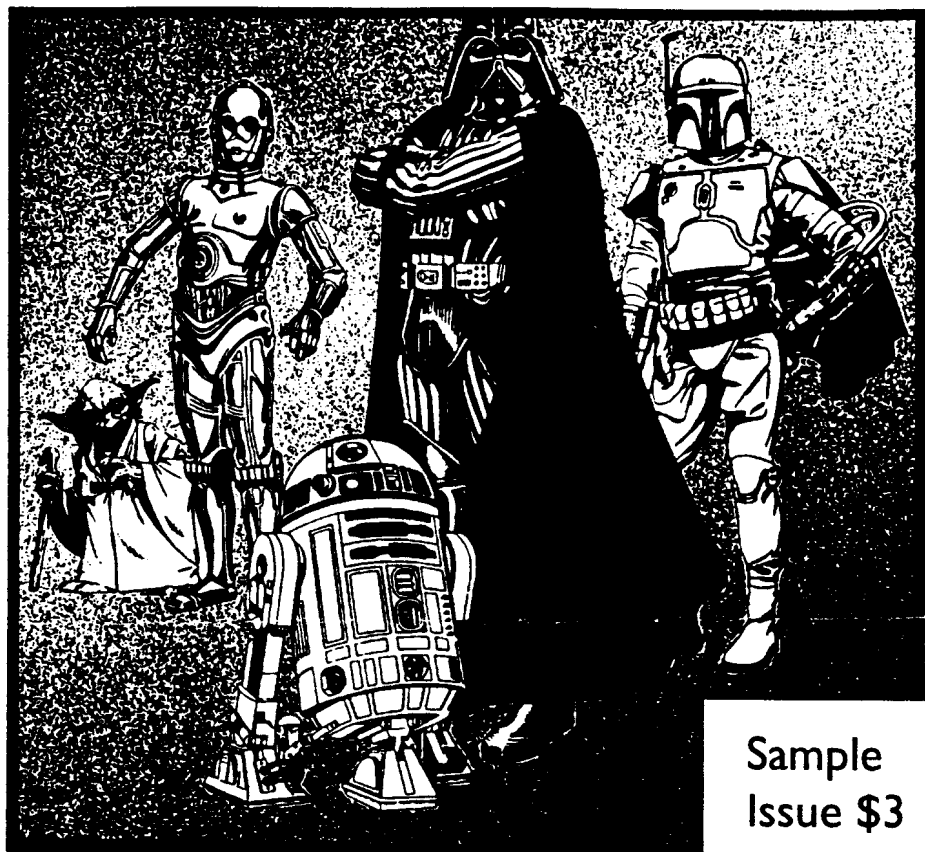
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Fiorenzo Delle Rupi & friend









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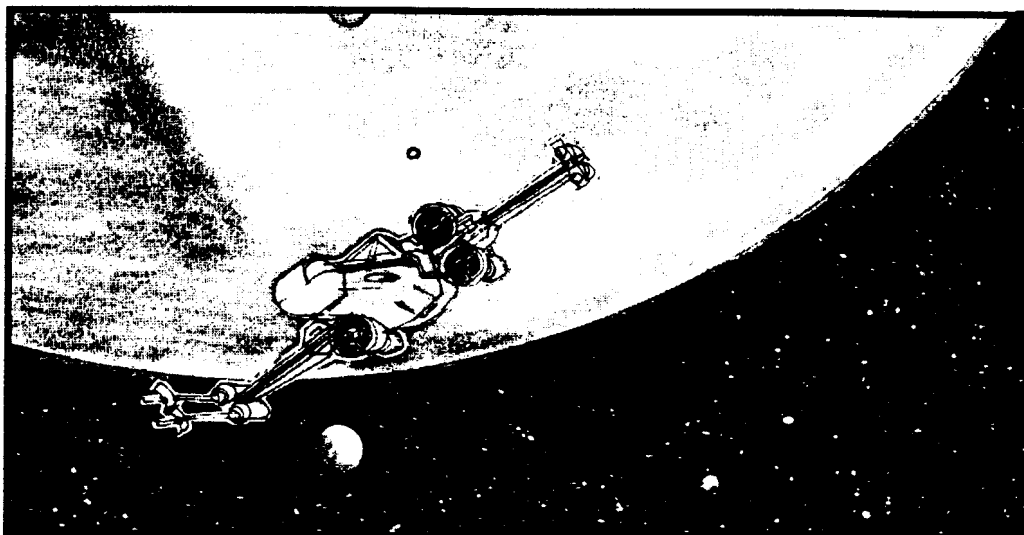
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# IMPERIUM III



## Wanted:

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Your original Star Wars stories, vignettes, articles, poetry, filks, artwork etc. for Imperium III, due out for MediaWest\*Con 13. Deadline for submissions is 1 April 1993.

Contributors so far include Pat Grant (a.k.a. Ye Editor), L. Hyde, ZP Florian, James Casselbury, Kirk Taskila and Diane Duane.

We would be honored if you would join us!

## Submission Guidelines

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**If you don't have a computer:** Please use a typewriter and double-space your copy.

**Computers: Macintosh** – please use a word-processing program (MS Word, TeachText, etc.) rather than DTP. Formatting: double-spaced, flush left, one tab at beginning of each paragraph. Send hard copy with your disk. **Other systems:** save as ascii (text) to a 3½" disk and send hard copy. If you can only use 5¼" disks, then send hard copy only. Don't format anything, i.e. no 'smart' quotes, italics, bold or underlining.

**If you have a modem:** send to CIS 70274,3160 (70274.3160@compuserve.com for internet), or AOL: ArwenR, or call (212) 877-1086 to arrange a good time to mail.

**Artwork:** Do not send original artwork! Send two camera ready copies — photostats would be best. Keep in mind that no matter the original size, the final version will fit on 8½" x 11" paper. Call if you have any questions.

### Send submissions to:

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605 West End Avenue  
New York NY 10024-1608

Please send a SASE along with your work so I can let you know it arrived safely.

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# July 1993

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(continued on back flap)

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# THE ELEMENT OF FIRE

# TEXTUAL POACHERS

## TELEVISION FANS AND PARTICIPATORY CULTURE

### HENRY JENKINS

"Get a life," William Shatner told *Star Trek* fans. Yet, as *Textual Poachers* argues, fans already have a "life," a complex subculture which draws its resources from commercial culture while also reworking them to serve alternative interests. Rejecting stereotypes of fans as cultural dupes, social misfits, and mindless consumers, Jenkins represents media fans as active producers and skilled manipulators of program meanings, as nomadic poachers constructing their own culture from borrowed materials, as an alternative social community defined through its cultural preferences and consumption practices.

Written from an insider's perspective and providing vivid examples from fan artifacts, *Textual Poachers* offers an ethnographic account of the media fan community, its interpretive strategies, its social institutions and cultural practices, and its troubled relationship to the mass media and consumer capitalism. Drawing on the work of Michel de Certeau, Jenkins shows how fans of *Star Trek*, *Blake's 7*, *The Professionals*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Starsky and Hutch*, *Alien Nation*, *Twin Peaks*, and other popular programs exploit these cultural materials as the basis for their stories, songs, videos, and social interactions.

Addressing both academics and fans, Jenkins builds a powerful case for the richness of fan culture as a popular response to the mass media and as a challenge to the producers' attempts to regulate textual meanings. *Textual Poachers* guides readers through difficult questions about popular consumption, genre, gender, sexuality, and interpretation, documenting practices and processes which test and challenge basic assumptions of contemporary media theory.

Henry Jenkins is Assistant Professor of Literature at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

*Studies in Culture and Communication*, John Fiske, Series Editor

Routledge, New York July 1992 304 pp

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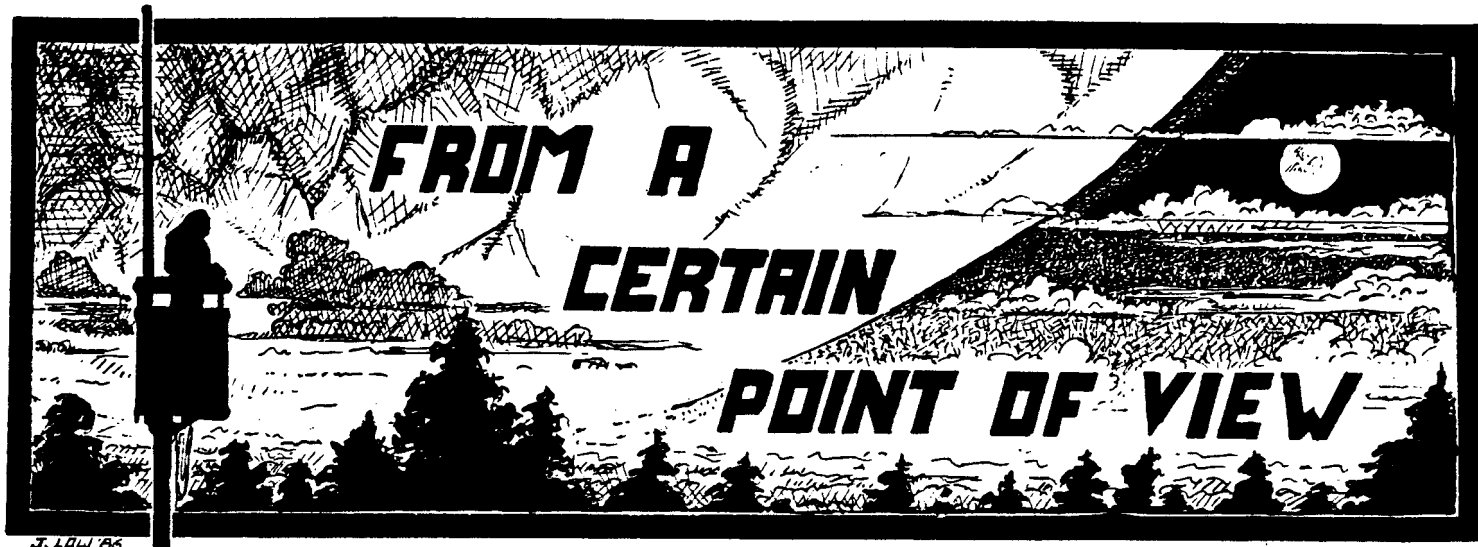
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Wanda Lybarger  
3467 Ethel Avenue  
Columbus, GA 31906

Hello, out there! Have been away from letterzines a long time except as an intermittent bystander. Everyone has such a lot of intriguing ideas and really got me into the possibilities; I'd probably gone on just happily reading. I'd mostly draw it than write it. But Jacqueline, with my permission, tossed out an idea I'd put to her in a letter, issue before last of SE. I see by the replies in the last issue that I ought to clarify the original thought before the arguments go too far afield (not that they aren't fascinating in their own right).

I was postulating that the Jedi teachings Luke inherited had come through two filters which distorted their original intent. I'll get to Yoda in a minute but first filter, I considered, was humanity coming late to an exposure to a much older, alien thought process and experience. Especially, Cheryl Pryor and Maggie, I'm making a distinction between the Force -- as an aspect of the natural order an "energy field created by all living things that binds the universe together" (Ben's words, my emphasis). As such, I treat it as neutral. And the Jedi, a *religion* -- the term is used by Tarkin and not contradicted by Vader -- of adepts who can manipulate the Force. Not synonyms at all. As a religion, the Jedi are subject to schools, schisms, and evolution through contacts with cultures other than the present one.

Actually, my musings grew out of "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." In the deepest sense, Kipling was right; the tenets of Buddhism and Hinduism become profoundly different in *interpretation* as they travel west. The profound

difference of *perception* began over thousands of years of culture and thoughts proceeding from almost diametrically opposed premises. See, Maggie, there's no *assuming* your implication that one or the other philosophy or perception is "limited" or "inadequate". There's only the reality that when minds meet something fundamentally different, the thing can only be made comprehensible by equating it with a familiar context. Since the matching is never exact, a *distortion* and *synthesis* occurs.

According to Ben, the Knights have been guardians and peacekeepers for 1,000 years. Yoda's been training for 800. "The Dark Times", the coming of the Emperor, appear to have happened in Ben's lifetime. Can the weakness have been introduced during that synthesis (nothing to do with the Force itself)?

The *denial* of all anger strikes me as an unhealthy attitude; the strict opposition of Light and Dark as Good and Evil is in fact that kind of alteration that occurs to a Western mind when confronted with Oriental Dualism. That's virtually the opposite of the Eastern view which takes Light and Dark together in balance to create harmony. That's the sort of "branching path" I envisioned happening with the Jedi. It's like the kid's game of Telephone: by the time the words are whispered from ear to ear, the message at the end of the line is amusingly garbled from the one originally sent. How different if the minds beat to different pulses, move to rhythms of a cycle that doesn't even involve reproduction -- not just East and West but human and non-human. How tragic can it be when two good wills don't make a "right"? I recommend Orson Scott Card's Ender books, especially the second.

Matthew: I never said I pictured Yoda as an "evil wizard". He's a thinking, living, therefore, emotional

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being (in fact, he ignores the no anger rule with a fine old tantrum the first time we see him); he's as subject to *blind* bias as anyone. He's far from "saintly". I introduced the factor of Yoda having an unconscious grudge not from conviction but because I found a toe-hold for it in the movies' timeline and because it conveniently packaged all the ideas of a "fork" in the Jedi traditions in one place so it could be a feasible story idea.

A. G. Steyn: Gee, I wasn't intending to cause pain, just toss out some plot hooks to play with. For the record, I don't hold the little green wart in sacrosanct awe, but I've a sneaking fondness for the old curmudgeon. I *like* BEM's, love to draw them and have a lifelong passion for puppetry.

And this letter, especially for a first dip back in the water, is way too long so I'll save remarks on all the marvelous spread of speculation for another LoC. Just in parting, add me to the list of classic movie buffs (including silents) -- and Ted Turner should be tie-dyed with indelible ink! Also to the Brothers Cadfael enthusiasts and mouse-wielding southpaws. Everyone stay well. Looking eagerly for next SE.

## *Jedi Bias*

Marti Schuller  
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October 16, 1992

First and foremost, I want to congratulate Cheree on the ninth anniversary of SE! That's quite an accomplishment and you should be justly proud. SE has lasted longer than most marriages these days! It was fascinating for me, as a relative latecomer, to read who and what was in the first issue and I look forward to more of these "flashbacks". A quick word of congratulations also to Tim Blaes for his loyalty to SE and SW.

Per your request for personal opinions of *Dark Force Rising*, I enjoyed it more than the first novel and for the same reasons you stated, especially the more

in-depth look at the Noghrii civilization. I did feel Luke was treated a bit too innocently, but then I'm biased where my fav Jedi is concerned.

The MWC photos were wonderful. Katy is certainly turning into a darling cutie. I want to congratulate, belatedly, the winners of the Fan Qs and thank you, Cheree, for accommodating us by supplying a Fan Q ballot for next year. I plan to photocopy and use it and encourage others to do likewise. Though the STAR aWARDs are special and greatly appreciated, the Fan Q shouldn't be neglected either. Recognition by nomination and accolades for winning are always encouraging to receive.

Now, on to the letters.

Carolyn Golledge: I've only been fortunate enough to attend MWC once, but I did attend the now defunct KC Con twice. Stars were invited and in attendance at KC Con and it definitely altered the atmosphere. MWC is much more relaxed and fun, allowing fans to meet, exchange compliments on one another's work in fandom and new ideas, and generally be free to "cut loose". I have to agree with you that "stars" would spoil MWC. Besides, one of those I met at KC Con was so obnoxious that it's forever altered my perception of the character he plays, ruining my enjoyment of the major work he appears in.

I also want to welcome you back to SE and hope we'll see your letters regularly.

Z. P. Florian: You questioned, in your reply to Cheryl Pryor, whether Vader had the "equipment" to take on a mistress or satisfy a female admirer. My feeling is that he did, but that he would have scorned casual sex, being above such physical dalliances. It does create an interesting mental picture though if you envision him with full helmet and chest panel/respirator in place, doesn't it?

The spice. My personal feeling is that this particular smuggled substance was not a drug, either mild like cigarettes or hard like cocaine. Though I'm basically a Luke fan, I have my own strong ideas on what Han would and would not have done to earn a living. Smuggling drugs is something I don't feel he would have condoned. I believe the spice was just that -- a spice. Perhaps something like curry or some other exotic ingredient in high demand, but very heavily taxed.

Maggie Nowakowska: I wish you the greatest success with your "Brief History of SW Fanzine Fandom". I'd be happy to contribute, but I don't feel

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I've been involved with fandom (I got in in 1986) long enough to be of any useful service. Nevertheless, I will be interested in the final product.

Tammy Olsen: Welcome to SE and SW fandom! It's always great to see new names and hear new opinions.

I really like your idea for a story where Luke has a "Force-blind" child. Unfortunately, I'm convinced that the Emperor's attack on Luke rendered him sterile, so I won't tackle the story, but I'd love to see someone try it.

Be sure to share your adventures at the '92 Summer Olympic Games with us. I hope you had fun and have lots to tell.

Mary Jo Fox: Another big welcome to you. I think most of us felt as you did about being alone. Isn't it wonderful when you discover you aren't? As for everyone in SE having been involved with other fandoms for a long time, I can assure you not all of us fall into that category. SW was my first and will probably be my only fan interest. I thoroughly enjoy many other sci-fi and fantasy ventures, but only SW has so captured my heart as to get me involved in SE and fan fiction writing. Though I was not a child at the time of ANH's premiere, I was below 30 and a young mother. My sons grew up surrounded by SW. I feel our beloved saga touched all of us on different levels, depending on our ages, backgrounds, etc., and that's why sharing our perspectives and reactions, as well as ideas about, SW makes SE so much fun.

I have been discussing the issue of Leia's virginity prior to Solo with a friend. It seems a good question to me. Having given some thought to this issue recently, I feel the answer is no, she was not a virgin. I don't believe Leia had vast experience by any means, but I do think there had been at least one or two other men in her life. I believe Han was special, however, and definitely her last, but I'll look forward to what others think.

Hey! It really is a small world, isn't it? When did you attend Mizzou and why MU if you're from VA? Maybe we have mutual acquaintances.

I agree with you that no future SW films would be preferable to badly made, commercial interest only ones, but I don't want to believe that Father George would do that to us.

As for your reply to Maggie, I firmly believe that the electroshock Han received was entirely different from that Palpatine used on Luke. Therefore, Han could retain his, er, abilities to regenerate, shall we

say? Whereas Luke could suffer permanent sterility. NOT impotence, just sterility. In fact, I wrote a rather sappy story outlining this very plot.

Jennifer Moore: Writing can be addictive and, take it from me, writing in fandom can teach you volumes. I look at my early efforts and cringe. For me, SW writing has been like a seven year education I wouldn't have missed for the world! Best of luck and keep at it.

Catriona Campbell: You know that I agree with you about Anakin's appearance not being a letdown, but I loved your story of the Green Cross Code Man. I could just see all those startled little faces!

As for how Vader discovered Luke, I do disagree with you and everyone else, however, in that it was through investigative efforts. I prefer to believe that Palpatine had learned about Luke's existence shortly before ANH takes place, deciding to withhold the information as his ace-in-the-hole against Vader. Luke represented no immediate threat to him at that time and having secret knowledge to use against his ambitious pupil certainly feels like something Palpatine would have loved.

I will agree with you -- 100% -- about Sean Connery. Though I didn't particularly care for him in his Bond days, I adore him now. He is sexy, intelligent, and a delight in every role he plays!

Debbie Kittle: Do me, and others like me who can't afford to belong to the LFL Club a favor please? Tell us what Father George has to say re SW in the LFL newsletter interview. I'd certainly appreciate it.

Thanks also for your kind comment on "Enemy" in *Another Sky... #2*. I'm glad you enjoyed it.

A. G. Steyn: Boy, have you pried the lid off Pandora's Box. I can hardly wait to see how others react to your words. Strictly from my own p.o.v., I have to agree with you about some editors who rewrite a contribution without consulting the author. Minor changes, especially in grammar, punctuation, etc., are expected and welcomed, but major alterations really grate on my nerves. I don't believe an editor *automatically* has the right to "polish" or "embellish" a story or impose their ideas on what sounds appropriate for a character on someone else's work. If a story, poem, etc., is that out of line with their tastes, they should reject it. If it needs additional work, they should make suggestions of which changes they'd like to the author and act accordingly.

I've been extremely fortunate in that few of my stories have met with unjust editing or even overt



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criticism by editors. However, I've had many friends who've had their work sabotaged or distorted by editors making unannounced (and needless) changes. One I won't name even had the entire plot altered by the addition of one sentence! (Needless to say, my friend was absolutely livid over not being consulted and never sent any other work to that zine again.) It's only courtesy to me to contact a writer if such drastic measures are deemed necessary.

This is a two way street we're on. Writers and artists need editors to display their labors, but without those artists and writers, there'd be nothing for an editor to publish. I think we sometimes feel that because editors expend so much energy, time and money doing a zine, they are above reproach, but that just isn't right.

As for restrictions placed *in advance* by editors, here I disagree with you. An editor is every bit within his or her rights to decide what sort of material they will or won't accept. Just as editors/publishers shouldn't be dictators, neither should contributors be. If you disagree with a zine's policies or guidelines, don't buy or contribute to it. Do your own.

To change the subject only slightly, I'd like to make a request of *all SE readers*. Veronica Wilson and I have been trying to come up with a word to use in place of "submission" for fan writers. "Submitting" to a professional publishing house may be acceptable, but in fandom, unfortunately, some editors tend to take this word too literally. "Offering" sounds too much like a religious sacrifice and "contribution" takes it for granted the piece will be accepted. Can any of you creative people make alternate suggestions?

Sandi Jones: Welcome back to SE. I hope to see more of your letters in these pages from now on.

Well, you and I disagree on Luke's need for a mate, as you know, but I definitely agree with you that by now most of us have a fully developed version of Luke (or Han) of our own. Just because I feel "my" Luke wouldn't do one thing or another doesn't mean I can't still enjoy stories about "yours".

I also feel Lucas would do best with relative unknowns in future SW films.

Tim Blaes: Ever considered Jedi Force implications in lovemaking? Are you serious? I have regular daydreams about it! Sigh...

Virginie Dutech: Hail and well met, my friend! Welcome to the exciting world of SE. May you enjoy it as much as I do.

Whoa. Wait a minute. Your English is astonish-

ing and your story ideas are intriguing. For Force's sake, don't pay any attention to what I say! I am certain that writing in a foreign language must be an experience in masochism, but please keep trying -- oops, doing. Whatever! I do hope you reconsider your attitude toward poor Kenobi, though. We have enough Obi-Wan bashers. Give that old man a break.

I adore your idea of Han coming from a "normal, middle-class background" with a "high school teacher dad" and an "insurance clerk mom". Write it!!! Have him take Leia home to meet the folks. It could be a great comedy. Han's double life exposed -- nurturing his rascal image against his mundane upbringing. I love it.

Thank you for the kind and undeserved credit you gave me at the end of your letter, but like Treena and others, I feel it was "your destiny" to remain in SW fandom and find SE. Your active participation will certainly be welcome.

To Michelle Malkin, Cheree and all the rest of you who said you'd welcome stories concerning Luke's lovelife, thanks for the feedback. Like Treena, I'm leery of introducing a female character for fear she will automatically be labeled a "Mary Sue". I know other writers have succeeded, but they're few and far between. If I feel inclined to add a touch of romance, therefore, I limit it to Han and Leia, usually, but after reading all your responses, perhaps I'll rethink my attitude. In fact, I feel a couple of ideas stirring in the back of my brain even as I write this. Just remember, you asked for it!

This concludes my letter. I'm already getting excited about MWC '93 and the possibility of meeting as many of you as possible. Until next SE, take care of yourselves and keep the Force, always. Peace.



---

Leanne Wingo  
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October 18, 1992

Greetings, SE readers... I'm back. I did a really stupid thing last month. I kept thinking the deadline for SE#33 was October 1st instead of September 1st, so a few days before October I sat down to write a LoC and discovered my mistake. Talk about a no-brainer. Oh, well, it certainly isn't the first time I've done something so stupid... Onto the Loc...

Guten Tag, A.G.: So tell me, did ya manage to get that life-sized inflatable Corellian past customs on your flight home? I certainly hope you're recovering from the vacation from Hell. Yes, folks, have pity on the woman, for if it could go wrong, it did go wrong... National Lampoon's on the line. Seriously, it was GREAT to meet you and I hope you can forgive me for my ... er ... rather reckless (at times) driving habits. But officer, it wasn't MY fault... Honest! I was under the influence of a crazy (German) Corellian, really!

Someone mentioned your warped sense of humor and I must say you did it to me again! Twice, I nearly fell over laughing at your letter. Ask Dan Quayle for English tips, indeed! (Don't listen to her, folks, there is no "White House Potatog Quayle's" in town! It's a nasty rumor!) That was humorous enough, but the image of Bette Midler playing Han's mom sent me into hysterics. I think that's a trip and I can almost visualize it as some sort of crazy spoof... Han takes Leia home to meet mom ... and is Leia in for a surprise! NO WONDER he turned out that way; he had NO choice!

I know we discussed this last month, but I think it's important for me to say it here also, that I believe you made a valid point about editing. Obviously, I know nil about the production of a zine, having never been an editor, but perhaps an easy way to solve the problem is that when a story is received by an editor that if s/he deems it necessary to edit for whatever reasons, s/he write to the author with a copy of the edited version before the zine goes to press. Along with that a letter explaining why s/he felt that changes were important. That way, the author can see the changes and if s/he doesn't like them, s/he is free to respond by saying "I don't really like the new version and I'd rather you simply send the story back." Then the author can send the story elsewhere if s/he likes. Any

opinions on the matter?

Goodness, Marti! It sounds like you're working for Cheree as a recruiting office with all these wonderful people you've brought in! Welcome, Catriona (I love your name!) and Anne-Virginie, we're honored that you could join us! (Now, if we could just convince a certain Bostonian we both know...)

What happened to the Jedi of old who fell to the Dark? I have no idea, but it's a good question and I hope some people have answers. You're probably right that Vader wasn't the first, but who was the first? I'm thinking of the question that someone brought up before (forgive me, I can't remember who this person was, Maggie maybe?) that the problem with the Force started when the Jedi began to differentiate between light and dark? Perhaps it all started by some crazy experiment. Say the Jedi were getting all these ideas of the different factions of the Force (Light and Dark, that is) and someone decided to put the theories to the test and whammo! They created a mess. What they do with the mess, I have no idea, but it's a great idea to ponder.

My goodness, dear, you've been writing wonderful stories this summer! I feel so honored that I've gotten to preview most of them. Once again, "The Invitation" is my favorite. It's a beautiful story and a real tear-jerker.

Have fun at MediaWest next year! I wish I could go, but it looks like I'll be hitting WorldCon in San Francisco instead. I left my heart... Is anybody else going? I'd love to get together with fellow fans and talk SW!

Debbie: I've been meaning to talk to you about this blazing inferno business and it's been hotter than Tatooine lately. Now, I am not a cold weather fan (Bleahhh!) but these 109° temperatures are ridiculous! So take your wishes back!

\*sigh\* I envy y'all who get the Sci-Fi Channel. My cable company keeps promising it for the next year, but I'll believe it when I see it.

Re: Issue #32, by all means, please drop me a line if you make it out this way next summer. I'd love to get together and talk SW. By the way, you didn't miss much at the Wild Animal Park. I merely mentioned it 'cause it's so close to me. The Zoo is much less expensive and a lot more fun. Prettier, too.

Yeah, *Patriot Games* was quite good. Bummer that you missed Harrison filming it, though. God, what that man does for my hormones...

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**Z. P.:** If you ask me, that whole Endor scene was very weird. I must say I definitely agree with Maggie that it should have remained a surprise about Vader being Leia's father until they shot the scene. I don't know why I never thought of it myself, but it probably would've gotten a truer reaction from Carrie. If it hadn't worked (like if she had laughed or something, thinking it was a joke), they could've simply scrapped it and started over. I have a real problem with the way that scene was written anyway. The dialogue between Luke and Leia always seemed rather bizarre. Is it just me or do others agree with me? No, it didn't seem to fit Leia's character to advise Luke to run away and hide; even Luke must think so, as he told her, "You've always been strong."

Hi, **Carolyn!** Well, by now, I'm sure you've received my letter. I'm so sorry for being so lazy! Please don't deactivate me! You know, I'm starting to regret I mentioned "The Day George Went Too Far" because it's one of those things I'll never finish and my friend Lisa has the original copy.

Oh, ya, give Luke a Corellian! I like that idea... Maybe Han has a little sister. (Who looks remarkably like a young Bette Midler? Ha!)

**Mary Jo:** I think you hit a nail on the head with your assessment of people being wary of fandom because of fear that someone will associate them as a whacked out dweeb. I have a lot of friends who I know think I'm strange for my interests concerning SW. I even have friends who are big sci-fi fans, going to many cons, who don't want to involve themselves in fandom, because of that image we've been unfairly given. (I have one friend who was willing to stand in line for six and a half hours for tickets to see Depeche Mode who thought I was crazy to drive to L.A. to go to the SW con in '87 ... in my mind, there isn't much difference, is there?)

Yes, yes! I agree with your statement about people who were 15-30 years old when they saw ANH. Except I was even younger, being the tender age of eight (I just gave my age away, huh? Oh, well...) when SW was released. I can remember playing with SW toys with all the other kids in the neighborhood. SW was a BIG part of my childhood. I'll never forget the day I "ditched" class to stand in line all day to finally see JEDI. The next day, Kathy (my partner in crime) and I were the talk of the freshman class as we *knew* if Darthie was Daddy. My impressions do run very deep because of things like that. I often wonder if the film had been released right now, if it would

have the same impact on me. I kind of doubt it.

I don't believe you're a heretic for saying something I agree with; I also would rather have no new film than have a bad film with the SW label. (The mere thought of Julia Roberts in a SW film is enough to give me nightmares.)

Ohhh, I love underground music! Depeche Mode is one of my favorite groups (and that above mentioned concert was awesome!) and I also really dig New Order and The Cure. So, don't feel bad; you're not alone!

Hiya, **Lisa:** I just loved your article. The book sounds quite interesting. Thanks for sharing it! I also loved your definition of a Mary Sue -- that was terrific!

**Maggie:** Well, you certainly got my curiosity at a peak. I am really looking forward to your zine concerning the history of fandom. But will someone please tell me what exactly was the "Church of Ford/Cathedral of Luke"? I don't know if I can wait for the zine to hear this story!

I love your idea for the story making Mothma and Mom twins and can't wait to read it. I also loved your idea for an alternate from issue #32. That sounds somewhat similar to an idea that I have where Darth raises the children. God knows I won't ever have the time to write that either!

Which leads me to **Sandi's** wonderful idea of publishing story outlines in zines. What do you think, Cheree? I would love to read all these ideas that time may not permit someone to write. Like you say, Sandi, perhaps another writer can fill in the blanks. ((*Ed: Why not list it under the Authors/Artists Exchange if you have a story outline that's up for grabs? Then interested writers can contact you directly.*))

To everyone saying they saw different versions of the films: Does anyone remember seeing scenes with Biggs? My friend Lisa swears she saw them when ANH was released. Also, I remember seeing Han looking out the window of the Bepin apartment and not Leia. Am I crazy or does anyone else remember this?

Well, I'm guess I've rambled on long enough. This letter certainly is longer than I intended it to be! Until next time, here's wishing everyone a blessed holiday season! May the Force be with Y'all!

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Barbara Anderson  
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October 25, 1992

After receiving and reading my second issue of SE, I think I'm ready to try and become part of this galactic think-tank. Could kick myself for not subscribing sooner. Promise me something, though; promise me you'll tell me *before* printing this if I'm in danger of making a complete ass of myself. (Of course, it won't be the first time and I'm sure it won't be the last.)

Just recently returned from a trip to Orlando, Florida, and have decided that MGM Studios should be made a mandatory pilgrimage for anyone in fandom. Have a fantasy wish that MediaWest could be held down there on a one-time special basis. What a weekend that would be for role-playing. Especially with the Star Tours ride. I went six times and I could have spent the whole day on it. On the outside grounds, there's a full-scale sandskiff from ROTJ on display as well as a snow speeder, plus a full scale mock-up of an AT-AT! ... "Most impressive." Disney also had little Ewoks running around ... *could* have done without them, actually. The ride itself is the best and for an avid SW fan, it was like reaching the highest level of nirvana. One is taken down the Death Star trench, fired upon by TIE-fighters, caught in a tractor beam, and when the "ship" switches into hyper-drive ... the stars blur and burst on the screen, the ship tilts, you are pressed back in your seat and, personally, I shrieked with pure delight. It took no effort at all to totally believe I was on an Alliance shuttle that had just gone to lightspeed. If anyone in SW fandom gets the opportunity to go, run, do not walk ... but *do* collect \$200. I went ballistic in the gift shop and even the entrance to that is an exact replica of the entrance to the Imperial shield bunker on Endor. Yeah, I went over and pretended to try and hot wire the doors open.

Okay ... have stalled long enough. Though I've been in SW fandom for a while, I've never written to a letterzine before. This is rather a daunting undertaking; putting one's thoughts and opinions out there for so many people to read, react to and answer (if they choose) all at once. I imagine having the courage of one's convictions is a prime personality requisite to do this on a regular basis, but after

reading Carolyn G.'s letter and A. G. Steyn's, I started thinking that maybe a thick skin, a strong ego, a high sense of self-worth, and when cornered, an "I don't give a bantha's ass," attitude might also be appropriate. Their letters had me wondering if I'd need stormtrooper armor if I planned to express an unpopular or controversial opinion. Both gave the impression that they expected their ideas and feelings would unleash a tidal wave of either harsh criticism or unfavorable responses. But after finishing the entire zine, I don't think I have too much to worry about.

It's true that fandom as a whole is an opinionated bunch. We're very passionate about our "particular" interests, be it a series, a person or an idea, but I'd also like to think we're a *tolerant*, opinionated bunch. Most of us don't find ready acceptance in the mundane world and it's only in fandom that we feel comfortable and secure enough to wear our hearts on our sleeves, as it were.

Perhaps in the early days (I can only surmise from what I've heard and been told as I "discovered" fandom in 1985), when fandom was just being defined by fans themselves, tempers ran high, lines were drawn and, sadly, friendships were lost because of a difference in opinion. Since then, I think a lot of us have learned from such self-destructive behavior; hopefully, we've grown past the lock-step group mentality. It's always nice to find someone who thinks as you do, a soul-mate, but one shouldn't totally exclude those that don't. One of the greatest concepts to emerge from the Star Trek universe was IDIC ... Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations. I *think* I quoted that right. A difference of opinion is a sign of a healthy civilization. It encourages fresh thinking. It makes life interesting. Sameness is boring.

I *do* object to a difference of opinion for the sole purpose of *creating* a controversy, to set people one against another. If it's a sincere belief, fine, but if someone just wants to stir the pot so they can sit back and watch the anger grow and fester, then that person is a parasite feeding off of one of fandom's greatest strengths.

IMO, *Southern Enclave* is also one of fandom's strengths. It provides a valuable, needed service and sets an example. It's a meeting of minds, a forum to present ideas of all kinds without risk of personal censure. I don't believe that Carolyn has to worry about ropes or knives or that A. G. will be stoned to death by the SW gang, however tongue-in-cheek their statements were made. What they *will* receive will be

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intelligent, perceptive answers with strong personal opinions as an aside, but all delivered without one molecule of malice. I think it comes down to respect. All the letters in SE have that same quality; respect for everyone's opinion, for everyone's personal interpretation of the universe.

Without further rhetoric ... here's mine in answer to some of yours. One more observation. Do you realize that with SW as a starting point, you've discussed religion, morality, anatomy and physiology, economics, sociology, art, music, literature, psychology, physics, chemistry, humor, English, foreign languages, history, human and xeno-biology, pharmacology, math, astronomy, philosophy, etc., etc.? There's an incredible amount of knowledge within the pages of each issue. Not only are we tolerant and opinionated, but we're also smart! (Did I mention talented and creative?)

Nora Mayers: Hi, cuz! You know, I agree with you on YJJC re "Old Henry". (I refuse to call that geriatric embarrassment "Indy".) I work in a nursing home and object to the way Indy is portrayed as an old man because it's a stereotypical portrayal. The character is cantankerous, rude, forgetful, bumbling and complaining. They could have had Indy aging with grace and dignity as is more the norm for the majority of the populace. For that matter, they should not have had Indy grow old at all. This is a character that should disappear into the sunset, or reported to have walked into a temple with a blinding light and never came out. His final fate should be unknown. If they needed some way to introduce the stories, a discovered diary could have been used or at least just shown the back of an aged Indiana's head, a child's eye view of his knees with the fedora in his lap and let the audience use their imagination as to what an old Dr. Jones would look like. And that facial scar ... are we to believe that there was at least *one* time our intrepid archaeologist zigged when he should have zagged? Nah ... not *my* Indiana Jones. He may get battered and beat, but he always comes up smiling.

Z. P. Florian: Hey, I've got a story in the new *Flip of a Coin* and Luke gets the girl!

Spice and spice ... what *is* spice? Could be different things to different species. It was a *mined* item as Threepio refers to the "spice mines of Kessel." I'm assuming the mines were Imperial run and spice was a marketable commodity and the Empire would take a dim view of anyone trying to cut into the profits. As for *what* it was ... a hallucinogenic, an

anti-aging compound, a mood-elevator. Like heroin or cocaine, it might have legal medicinal uses. Don't think it's a food additive ... though at one time simple salt was worth its weight in gold to those who didn't have it. Here's a thought ... it's a drug that counteracts some of the more unpleasant side effects of hyperdrive, like an anti-emetic. Would certainly be a popular item in that case. The Empire could withhold shipments to a planet and shut down their spaceports or at least restrict travel to in-system.

Re: The Force and the Jedi Knights as an ancient religion. The Jedi may not have started out as a "religion", but one may have begun around or about them as a means for the common folk, the ungifted to explain the "powers" the Jedi possessed. The Jedi just used it to their advantage. As for having to have "faith", that applies to almost any endeavor, mystical or not. If you don't believe you can do something, it's not going to happen.

Last but not least, along with computers in the home being as common as telephones, I'd like to add fax machines to that. Imagine instant rewrites from writer to zine editor without having to go through the unreliable, chancy, destructive Post Awful!

Marti Schuller: I always thought that a glowing, passed-on ectoplasmic Jedi could only remain visible for so long before the timer dinged. But this brings up a whole lot of other speculative questions. Where are all the Jedis when they're not visible? Another dimension, different plane of existence? Jedi heaven? And what are they doing or what can they do? Ben tells DV that he'll "become more powerful than you can possibly imagine," but I don't see Obi-Wan as being able to do anything as a spirit-Jedi except talk. I'm assuming only "good" Jedis get to go there. Dark Jedis apparently can't achieve that higher level of the Force, nor do they even know of its existence. Vader is mystified by the disappearance of Ben's body. When Vader died, did the good Jedis come down like Valkyries and whisk him off? And what if all the Jedis decided to materialize at one time ... in one spot? (If any of these questions have been debated and touched on in previous issues, just tell me it's old data and pay me no mind.)

As for what the Jedi of old did with Darksiders, maybe it was possible for a council of Jedi masters to take a Jedi's powers from him/her. Maybe they were put into stasis ... maybe they went into group therapy!

Tammy Olsen: I almost envy you ... with maybe your first MediaWest in your not-too-distant future.

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With all the laughter, good feelings and synergy that is created during a MW weekend, it's a wonder Lansing doesn't glow. One word of advice, if you're planning on going and planning to zine shop: Better bring twice as much money as you did to Barcelona because you will find more zines than you can carry! Hope the Olympic trip was everything you wanted it to be. ((Ed: *Another tip -- Try to get all your clothes into just one suitcase and pack a collapsible tote or overnight bag solely for bringing back your zines. Also invest in a "luggage wheelie" if you don't have one. I've done this for years and have had no trouble getting my zines home on the plane. Of course, if you drive, then remember to leave room in the trunk!*))

Mary Jo Fox: Now I know that the question of "is she or isn't she?" (only her gynecologist knows for sure) with regard to Leia's sexual condition before Han has come up before in discussion, but it's always a fun topic. I like to think she was a virgin. Makes for terrific fan fic, rife with romance, humor, tension, and great sex scenes. Cool knowledgeable Leia so in control as a rebel leader and so out of control in Han Solo's embrace. (Hoo boy, it suddenly got very warm in here!)

You mentioned that Han got zapped in TESB without any damage to his reproductive equipment (Maker forbid!) using Leia's pregnancy in *Heir to the Empire* as a confirming factor. AU CONTRAIRE... I don't know *who* the father of Leia's twins is, but if the amount of emotion and affection that Timothy Zahn has written between Han and Leia in the two novels is any indication, it certainly *isn't* Han!

Catriona Campbell: (Lovely and striking first name ... at least on this side the Atlantic!) Re your reasons for not giving Luke a girl. You asked, I will tell you ... you're wrong. Can't speak for anyone else in fandom, but I know I put myself in every story I write, be it Leia or an original character and work at fulfilling private fantasies on paper. Good grief, what is writing for if not to place our favorite hero in situations that we have day-dreamed about?! That's how a story starts, as a private idea. It doesn't always have to be centered around a romance, but it doesn't hurt, either. Cheree's even *looking* for some old-fashioned romance. ((Ed: *Don't let my husband hear you say that! He might not understand!*)) There's a bit of MarySue in every story. It's the writer's skill that makes the difference between a MarySue that smacks you upside the head and one that is so subtle you don't recognize it for what it is. Don't let the fear of

a "tag" keep you from writing about Luke in love. At the very least, write the stuff just for yourself. The most important thing to remember is to continue to "have fun."

Why isn't there a male equivalent to MarySue, like "BillyBob"?

Debbie Kittle: Agree that the stories in the children's SW books are absurd, as are the new characters. The worst has to be the Imperial with the hanging blaster earrings. (I'm not kidding!) It's somebody's idea of a bad joke which is strange because the whip/musette bag and Ark of the Covenant that is in the display case in the illo of the Imperial museum in book 2 is someone's idea of a very good joke! I kind of like the idea of a Hutt in braids but naming him Zorba -- (give me Shorty's hat)! Anthony Quinn would have chest pains!

Matthew Whitney: Guilty pleasures and bad movies and Don Knotts -- have always loved *The Incredible Mr. Limpet*. Great animation melded with real people long before Roger Rabbit and friends.

A. G. Steyn: You've got a priceless, dry, low sense of humor. Thanks for the giggles.

With regard to your commentary on story editing and restrictions, I think you've got a live rancor by the tale. To me, it's reprehensible for an editor to change *anything*, in a submitted story without first asking and obtaining the author's permission, then informing the author of the changes and getting an okay on the changes. No exceptions! Conversely, the author has to be willing and open to accept the advice and expertise of the editor. Sometimes as authors, we're too close to our own material and can't see the need for improvement or correction. An objective editor can be invaluable. One has to respect (there's that word again) both sides and work together. I think one also has to keep the whole zine thing in perspective. Zines are out there for fun. Yes, they are near and dear to our hearts, but not a life and death event.

I think publishing guidelines and story restrictions are a good idea. An editor isn't someone who just collects stories and illos indiscriminately and slaps them together with a few staples. She's providing a product and people want to know what they're buying. If one goes to a Chinese restaurant, one expects to be served Chinese food, not Mexican. If I bought a Luke zine, I wouldn't expect to find a story featuring Han and would probably be quite miffed if I did. The editors who are stipulating what they will or will not accept are catering to either a specific group or to a

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wide audience in which they are trying to appeal to as many people as possible while not offending anyone. I agree that the latter makes for bland reading at times, but the final objective of an editor is to sell her zines. She's not telling you what you can or cannot write, just what she'll accept. No one can tell you what to write! Actually, these editors who do lay down pre-set story restrictions are doing a favor for those authors whose work would be turned down if submitted. Knowing what an editor will accept or won't, saves times, hurt feelings and postage.

Last, the editor sets the tone of the zine. The material she accepts is usually a reflection of her own interests and tastes. She has the right to say, "I don't want to read or type any story with slash/sex/violence in it because I personally find it offensive." There are enough zines out there that even the most outrageous story can find a home, though I don't think there's a zine editor alive who would print *anything* by Madonna. We all have much better tastes than that! One can also *work with* an editor. If you have a *good* literary reason for your "no-no" scene or plot, chances are that an editor will bend her rules. Ask yourself as a writer, "Am I putting this particular scene in for shock value or titillation, or is it important to the story?" If it's gratuitous *anything*, then it probably doesn't belong in the first place.

Nuff said from me, but Cheree was right. I predict this is definitely going to be a subject of debate for at least the next 3-4 issues of SE. Might even wind up as a panel at MediaWest.

**Anne-Virginie Dutech:** Why couldn't Luke influence Jabba? The simplest answer would be because Jabba did not have a weak mind, but maybe that is the answer. A strong personality, a leader-type, take-charge person might be able to fight off or resist the voice-control ability of a Jedi. The two times we see this ability utilized, both beings -- Bib Fortuna and the stormtrooper -- are people who have an inherently easily manipulated mind to begin with. They are both *used* to being told where to go and what to do.

**Han Solo's background:** If I remember correctly (and there is vast room for error in that statement), George's original bio had Han being abandoned/orphaned and raised by Wookiees -- not exactly normal middle class. Brian Daley (can we have him canonized?) (or at least ask him to give Timothy Zahn some pointers?) wrote that Han attended the Space Academy -- which means he probably returned to Corell at some point and obtained some formal edu-

cation. Not necessarily a prince or a gutter rat. Maybe he was a ward of the state or had a mysterious benefactor? Oh, Lord -- story idea #62. I'm going to quit while I'm ahead.

Query for the masses. Any thoughts on *Covington Cross*, the new television series set in Medieval England? A total 180° from SW, I know, but I enjoy the series very much (one more TV series about angst-ridden teenagers from California and I was going to experience some reverse esophageal peristalsis!). The costumes are glorious; SCA members should take this right to their hearts, but I can also see cross universe possibilities with *Robin Hood* and *Beauty and the Beast* (via a conveniently discovered time portal in the tunnels). Vincent already has the clothes! Some in fandom are going to take the series and run with it like a terrier with a slipper down the stairs. The zine stories are probably in the outline stage as I write this but it won't last. It's different and innovative, a sure kiss of death on TV.

You know, in addition to being fun, writing this has been an education. I've learned things about myself as well as learning from you. Hope everyone had a safe, joyous holiday season and that so far it's been a happy new year. We've got a lot to look forward to. Uncle George has said we're going to see the SW *FIRST* trilogy by the year 2000. What a way to bring in a new millennium!



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October 24, 1992

Number 5 lives. I do, too ... but just barely. Some of you have been to "Hell Con" -- I have been to "Hell Diego". When in doubt, go ask Leanne!

Yeah, Corellian holidays. Always following the motto: How wonderful a feeling when the pain subsides! In week #2, I managed to slam the iron gate leading to the pool area on my right index finger. WHAM! For a while, I was taking a trip through the galaxy ... (stars, stars, stars!). After that I spent one exciting hour trying to get a blood stain (from my busted finger) out of a delicate knit top. A helpful hint: if all else fails -- try toothpaste! It worked for me this time. Now my knit top will never get cavities!

For the rest of the week, my LEFT arm felt like it wanted to come off at the elbow. If this doesn't make sense to you, join the club. It didn't make sense to me neither.

In week #3, I AGAIN cracked a molar that has developed a strange habit of chipping in the month of September (1985 in Golconda, Nevada; 1991 in San Diego, CA, and now again in 1992 in San Diego). So I spent an hour at the dentist's office and had it fixed. It didn't hurt -- until I had to pay for it. 90 bucks cash! Gulp. The dentist is a very nice guy, tho. (And his name is Luke, by the way. Just for the record.)

In week #4, I pulled 2 stunts practically simultaneously. On Wednesday, September 23rd, a strong gust of wind picked up some very fine dust and blew it into my right eye (under my contact lens). I felt a slight irritation, but nothing that would have scared the socks off me. On Thursday, the irritation grew, so by 3 pm I took out the lens to give the eye a rest. Matters grew worse during the course of the day. At 11 pm, I wanted to prepare a cup of tea. Seeing only with one eye and rummaging around in a dark nook of the room, I didn't register how full the cup already was. Little wonder I managed to spill the entire contents of the cup -- in other words: piping hot tea -- over my left hand. YEOUW! Advice to His Shady Lordship: in case the scanner grid fails to make a lasting impression on certain spacers, try the "tea party" method.

Holding the hand under running water helped only

a little, so I went and got a bucket of ice and soaked my hand all night long. Try sleeping with your arm dangling down, your hand immersed in ice and water ... it makes for a wonderfully stiff neck/shoulder area. In the morning the pain in my paw had finally subsided. But not the pain in my eye. When I turned on the bathroom light, it felt as if someone stuck a lightsword in my right eye and out my left ear. OUCH! With an eye that sensitive to light and almost swollen shut, my weekend plans went on the fritz p.d.q. Instead of going places, I went to the Sharp Cabrillo Med Center and had my orb examined. The doc found a whole bunch of tiny dents on the surface of the cornea and prescribed some medicine. Two tiny bottles. 45 bucks. Eye exam: 98 bucks. Cab to/from the hospital: 13 bucks. All in all: 156 credits. These vacations weren't only painful, they were EXPENSIVE!

Oh, yes, and before I forget: I was involved in a car accident. No, nothing to really worry about. Just a minor mishap that left Leanne gasping for breath like a Sithlord after running up a steep hill -- and moi with a slightly stiff neck for the rest of the day. We did have lots of fun that day, tho. We went up to the "Big Orange" (L.A.) to meet with some old friends, then went to downtown Hollywood, took snapshots of the hand/footprints of Harrison, George, Steven and associates ... and went across the street to have lunch at the "Hamburger Hamlet", where we marvelled at the huge Indy/Steve mural, munched our burgers and talked stuff unfit to be printed in any self-respecting magazine.

I confess, I just couldn't resist laying my hand into Harrison's hand-print. Perfect fit! If the rest of ole HF's anatomy fits mine just as well, I might have to kill Melissa and drag "Indiana Solo" to the altar (I could have said "bed" but I wanted to make this legal).

During my second week in Diego, I rode the Amtrak north to Anaheim and met with Lisa Cowan, who gave me an exclusive tour through her beautiful new home, an "oh, Wow!" look at her collection of Hamill/Lucas material, and (aside from a tasty lunch) an in-depth look behind the scenes, so to speak. One amazing little lady.

Meeting Leanne and Lisa made up for all the trouble I encountered in those 4 weeks, and the two girls deserve a medal for putting up with me without throwing Donald Duckesque temper tantrums or pushing me over the railings of the Coronado Bay Bridge. Thanks a zillion, pals!