
Well, so much for my trip. And now on to issue #33 of SE...

Hooray ... all out war! Takes a damn ugly Kraut to start one, hmm? Me and my big mouth ... but then: this is a free galaxy and everybody has the right to his own opinion -- and mistakes, or at least I think...

I'm standing to what I said about (a) editing and (b) self-applied restrictions in our fandom. So, if you think I'm an asshole or a conceited ape: voice your opinions, friends. I'm dying to hear what you think/feel about these issues.

However, I would like to point one thing out: The bitching between Cheree and yours truly is (at least from my point of view) strictly a "business" matter. Personally, I have no reason to cross lightswords with her. From the few letters we exchanged before the incident as well as from what Leanne Wingo told me, I got the impression that Cheree is a very nice person. What started the argument was that I had submitted several short stories that were partially accepted, partially passed on to another zine editor, and partially returned. So far, so good. The ones returned were, on second reading, really BLAH! I was, however, not aware that the ones kept or passed on would undergo editing. And I was never informed about changes made in the script, and why (which would have been very important for me to know). So I was first shocked, then solidly miffed -- and I let Cheree know in a private letter, as I wanted to keep this strictly between the two of us. Cheree, however, made it clear that she was not going to discuss these matters "under the table", i.e., exchange private mail over the issue, but was only going to deal with this via *Southern Enclave*. So here we are. Reading Carolyn Golledge's last LoC, I find that Cheree did contact her to point out gaps in the story, make suggestions for improvements, etc., and did everything "by the book." As Cheree did not do so in my case, I can only assume that she somehow forgot to notify me/ask my permission for editing. If there were other reasons (even if they are totally personal), I want to know what they were. So, please, tell me, Cheree. This stupid hackle is getting us nowhere fast. If you DID notify me, but the letter got lost in the mail, I'm sorry for getting on your case. Things like that happen all the time. If you forgot to notify me ... hey, my mind's only good for washing the starch out of the spaghetti. If I don't take down notes and tack 'em to my office walls, I'll forget EVERYTHING within 5 minutes.

But if there are other reasons...

Ooops -- someone or something ate the tail of my LoC. It wasn't THAT bad, or was it, dear editor? ((Ed: Sorry, my fault. I didn't realize the partial reprint of the LoCs had chopped off part of that page. It wasn't intentional! And I have corresponded privately with A.G. since her LoC came in.))

The picture section is great. And another STAR WARRIOR owning a horse. Is everybody in this fandom mounted on his/her own hossy -- everybody but me, that is? This isn't fair. HALVIESS! C'mon, share your wealth, friends. If you all pitch in, one of your sending me an ear, another one an eye, a leg, a tail ... maybe by the end of next March I can glue the pieces together and finally have a nag of my own. (With my luck, I'll end up with an alien monster with 7 legs, 3 ears, one eye, 2 pricks, 3 mouths, and 9 tails.)

And now the LoCs...

Carolyn: A fanzine without a good "bruise/mendie" story is a fanzine I wouldn't buy. I want a little of EVERYTHING. So keep trashing the Corellian. I'll lick his wounds any day. I come from a fandom where one of the two heroes was also the "trashing" point of every 2nd story. And that wasn't the only thing we did to the poor cutie...

I did try to trash young Skywalker lately, but have the feeling the fandom/zines aren't ready for that yet. Hey, any sadists out there who want to do a "see who trashes whom best" competition?

So you liked my Royal Abbreviations? Thanks. In the future, I will probably sign letters with: "Your Royal Pain in the Butt." (Did I just hear you say "Amen", Cheree?)

Nora: Right on, Nora. I had the same thought. Why did GL have to link this new TV series to Indy? If he had called it "The Adventures of Billy Smith", I would have agreed: a fine series and really different from what we usually see on the small screen. But quite frankly: what I've seen of the new YJIC up to now had -- IMO -- nothing in common with "my" beloved big screen Indiana. In the movies, we get a Henry, Sr. who is a desk-and-library, scholarly type of archaeologist whose prime interest is medieval literature and the search for the Holy Grail. In the series, old Father Jones is zipping through the world (going to Egypt, for instance, where you are unlikely to find any medieval literature on the crusade and the grail) and meeting all kinds of famous celebs of the time. And young Indy is tagging along, obviously not needing to attend school regularly. Young Jones later on

wastes costly time by fighting for the Belgian army (as an American?) while he should really be studying for his high school diploma. The Indy I know from the big screen is just not the kind of guy who would follow trails that would not lead direct to the goal he has set for himself. I could picture young Indy doing all kinds of funny, unorthodox things at his high school, and later at various universities. I also could picture him joining his professor on excavation expeditions during semester breaks. The YJJC is an attempt to produce the "egg-laying wool-milk-sow", combining lectures on world history and moralizing tales with one of the best-beloved adventure heroes of our time. For me, it doesn't work. And yes, an old Indy running to a doc because of a bee sting is ridiculous. The way I know him, he'd run to a girlfriend for some TLC. ("And it hurts there, too!")

Z. P. Florian: Luke at a state banquet? I don't know ... cute as that kiddo may be, his table manners leave something to be desired. Just LISTEN to him eat his rations on Dagobah. (Keep your trap shut while chewing, Skywalker -- we can't hear the score of John Williams' music.)

About Darthie's "equipment": I always wondered what that little sliding door in front of his "lower armor" was for. If there's nothing there, then why would he need that door? Or is that just to make him look like he still could, if only he wanted?

Spice? I once read somewhere (in an official SW publication, if I remember right), that said "spice" is a strong aphrodisiac. So "Spanish Fly" comes close, hon. And sale of the stuff is obviously controlled by (if not entirely in the hands of) the Imps.

And what would Luke say if Kenobi casually told him: "By the way, that was your pop you just cut in half"? Probably, "Ooops!"

A doll exhibition? I'll join you as soon as I'll find a place that sells life-size, life-like Han and Luke dolls. Maybe I ought to try my luck at a place that sells "blow up" companions, for private hours? It wouldn't be too far off, since Han is full of hot air, anyway, most of the time. And just think of the opportunity to give the boys a ... job should they start leaking air.

Are we two the only people who consider Uncle Owen a grouchy kid- and wife-abusing bastard? I remember reading in *Skywalking* (Dale Pollock) that GL originally had plans to make Owen a real mean old man, even stealing Luke's money! See, I know why I wrote that bit about Owen beating up Luke...

About faith and the Force: Some people can walk over glowing coals, without getting burned. Physical explanation: a fine film of sweat on the soles of the feet will form kind of a cushion between the fire and the skin, enabling you to cross the fire (quickly, of course) without burning your "dogs". But what triggers this "perspiration on command"? It seems the result of auto-suggestion. And auto-suggestion calls for strong faith in your abilities and the matter itself. Just look at what some East Indian people can do: pierce their tongue, lips or cheeks with spears -- without feeling any pain or bleeding. The incisions by the spears don't even leave scars! By the way, did (as a kid) you ever try the game of making other people do what you wanted them to do by just thinking? I did, and my Dad did. And Mom states she did it, too -- and a lot of other folks I know. Leaning out a window, you watch some person strolling by and start thinking: You there. You're going to turn around before you reach the corner. Turn around. Turn around... And in 8 out of 10 cases, the person will actually stop and turn his head or turn around entirely before reaching the corner, and obviously not knowing why. Great fun! Haven't tried it in years.

Keep my WHAT dry? Wookiee? Sorry, m'dear -- no such beastie around my place. And I'm having enough to do with keeping myself dry after watching certain guys. (And I don't mean dabbing my eyes!)

Marti: Oh, look -- someone who actually **LIKES** my warped style and wants more of it. Are you aware that you are very lonely out there? I mean, there are not many in SW fandom who are dying to read more of what I turn out. I'm just too cuckoo...

Don't get me started on moderate temperatures. Winter is coming up with giant steps here in Teutonia. There has already been some snow during the second week of October up in the mountains of Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg (southern Germany). Here in the valley of the lower Rhine, near the Dutch border, where the climate is strongly influenced by the North Sea, it's rainy and cool, sometimes already COLD with temperatures down to the freezing point. Brrr! Someone take me back to Hell Diego, please!

Macauley Culkin as young Palpie? Now THAT's a great suggestion. And so fitting...

Maggie: Dear Maggie, it's not so much what I have forgotten than what I've never known about SW that keeps bugging me. Remember, if there's a bright center to the universe, I'm living on the "planet" that

it's farthest from.

Are you sure the book was really on uncle Adolf and cousin Josef and not really on uncle Palpie in the first place? Geez, this is creepy... Now I would love to know if old GL knew this book and modeled Palpatine after the aforementioned guys.

Tammy: Welcome! And since you didn't finish my ill-famed quote, I'll take the audacity and add the "...d". And after reading the LFL article on the planned SW se-/prequels ... are you happy or not? I would be, if only I could be sure that I'll live that long ... mind you, I'm almost 34 and beginning to feel the Force fade...

Mary Jo: The princess a VIRGIN? Our Leia? Never. She had only never "tried" a Corellian. But she was just too skilled in the verbal battle of the sexes and the flirting game, and too much aware of Han's dangerous charms to be a "blank page".

A "fax-orgy"? The only fax in my vicinity is the machine at the office. And my boss will have my ass for breakfast if I dare to mail my "never ending stories" via that machine.

Hmmm, I've been called a lot of things during my life, but a "crazy anarchist"??? Dammit, you know me so well -- people will think you took care of me in the looney bin. "Yeah, I am a Corellian, and yeah, I am a crazy anarchist ... so what?" (Grin!)

Jennifer: Ole Ben got himself maneuvered into a mighty tight spot and with his back to the wall didn't know what to do next. So, instead of taking the responsibility, he took the easy way out and (as suicide is -- according to the M.A.S.H. theme song -- painless) committed self-murder by lowering his defenses and letting Darthie chop him to fishbait.

You didn't expect a serious answer from me, or didcha?

Well, maybe old Ben realized that he could be more of a help to young Luke after joining the Force. Luke would be forced to rely more on himself and not cling to a teacher/father figure for moral support. Just a wild guess here...

Catriona: "Aw, come on -- it sounds better that way!" ?? That's what I'm always trying to tell my publishers. Trouble is, they're not buying it...

Treena, if all the girls in your stories are as down to earth and believable as your heroine in "Missing", I don't see any danger of ever tripping over the dreaded "Mary Sue" wire ... as I did with my first (non-SW) fanfic. AWFUL!!

The right time to tell Luke would, IMO, have been

once Luke started talking about leaving the farm and joining the academy, hence, start living independently on his own. A person has a right to know who he is and who his ancestors were. It may be too much for a small kid, but a young man ready to leave the nest should be emotionally secure enough to face the facts.

Pity? For what? I've told you before -- I'll tell you again: I LOVE "Missing". And if THAT was your first story, then I'm dying to read the ones you turn out now. Keep up the good work. (And don't skip the "h/c" stuff ... I'm a sadist and need that to drool over.

NO ONE knew ... I was referring to an interview with director Irv Kershner (Lucasfilm Fanclub Magazine #11) and I'll quote:

"So I studied fairy tales and that's why, when we got into the part that Luke Skywalker discovers he's Darth Vader's son, I found elements of that theme in fairy tales. But that story was kept a secret. We didn't even have that in the script. Nobody knew that, not even the actors. I had a page that I took when I was in California that was a substitute page for the scene when Luke is screaming at Vader and hanging on to that pole. Those words were put away in my book and when it came time to shoot, I explained it to Mark. But when he was saying, 'No, no, I don't believe it!', Darth Vader was saying totally different things than what you hear in the film. He wasn't saying, 'I am your father! We'll rule the galaxy together!' He was saying, 'You're going to do what I say!' (Laughter) So he had totally different lines. Then, when we went to put it together, we put the real words in. But Mark knew because I told him ahead of time. I told him he was Vader's son and he thought it was great. And he acted it magnificently! He was hanging there by a nylon cord over 40 feet of nothing with wind blowing him. I had fans and smoke aimed right at him. It was really quite dangerous -- I worried about it, too, and that's what made it so effective. When I went to the Command Performance in England of 'The Empire Strikes Back', in back of me was sitting David Prowse who was the body of Darth Vader. When the scene came on where Vader says, 'I am your father', Dave hit me on the head! (Laughter) He leaned over and said, 'Why didn't you tell me! I would've acted differently!'"

About behind-the-scenes secrets given away by a member of the cast ... I have heard certain rumors, but I am not sure if I should say anything here. And, no, it's neither MH nor HF.

Deja-vu -- and Luke remembering a past life? I once had the same thought inside my old jughead. Hmmm, I've had some exciting deja-vu happenings in my time, but I'm still puzzled over how a vegetable would take mental notes on its surroundings in a way that they'd still be remembered in an afterlife as a half-human?

By the way, the company I work for has a daughter company (THOR Ceramics) in Scotland (a plant in Clydebank, and an office in Edinburgh).

Debbie: Since you read *Dark Force Rising* without falling asleep, would you please wake up Leanne and me and tell us how the story ends? (You get it: we were not amused.)

Sandi: Too many mates for Luke? Hey, there's never too much of a good thing!

Blame it on Golledge? Ole Ben will like to hear that. At last, someone who doesn't put the blame on him!

And if it sounds like I'm making "ole Gridface" look like Mr. Nice Guy, it's only because I'm afraid he might one fine day appear on my doorstep to have a word with me in private!

Michelle Malkin: Hi, there, Mrs. Jabba. De wanna wanga?

Did I really do that to you? Shame on moi. Blush! Oh, by the way: a "/" between your name and Jabba's would not have been appropriate: (a) you two are not of the same sex ... and (b) slash is a no-no in this fandom!

No, I don't remember friend Boba in *Robin of Sherwood*. Good looking? How could I have missed him?!

Tim: You little devil, you. What a provoking thought about the Jedi as lovers... Gotta find myself such a Force-user IMMEDIATELY. But with all the Jedi leading such pious lives, I might have to put up with the old stand-up ... uh, stand-BY, Han Solo.

Lovemaking too intense for Luke? It just occurred to me that maybe Jedi don't need to have active sex (unless for reproductive purposes), but get their kicks by mindlinking with other people having an exciting time together. But hold it right there... Luke mindlinking with Han while he's doing it with Leia? INCEST!! Luke mindlinking with Leia while she's with Han? SLASH!! Good golly ... that doesn't leave him with much of a choice, huh? Caught between the devil and the deep blue sea...

You mention the scene where Han jumps through the closing blast door (ANH, Death Star scenario).

Watching that scene I have the notion that poor ole HF had some trouble finding his feet after barely making it through the door. The landing was highly unstable, and I wonder if he actually kissed the floor or found his balance in due time?

Cheryl: My initials stand for a first and middle name I couldn't care less about. You will find out reading the thing I'm compiling for the Crew Roster files. If you don't like my initials, simply call me "Fritz". But never use my full name -- or I'll personally show you the Dark Side of the Force (and knowing you, you'd probably even like that). DARTHIE for PRESIDENT! It's better than the other 3 stooges applying for the job now. And, yes, you are quite welcome to do a story on "Lando the Space Playboy." Just don't expect me to write it. At least not within the next 2 years. I've got 3 unfinished stories sitting around here, waiting to be typed. Plus a bunch of toons that I will have to draw within the coming weeks.

Anne-Virginie: Welcome! I would like to greet you in French but I'm just learning that (very difficult) language and any try would only have you in stitches. Therefore, a plain and simple "hello" will have to do.

My old man has been to southern France during the war (first Sete, then Perpignan, finally Port Vendres, where he was with the Harbor Police (German Navy). Dad liked it down there.

Reasons why I made Han a ghetto kid instead of a lad with a normal middle-class background? Yes, it could be that Han comes from a perfectly normal family (hey, we're talking family values here, Mr. Vice President). But somehow I doubt that -- in my fave pirate's favor.

Being born in the gutter and -- from life's earliest stages on -- faced with misery and hardships, never really having a fair chance and never being able to develop trust and deep emotions, a person can turn to crime out of utter desperation. This doesn't make the crime less ugly or more acceptable, but it makes the wrongdoings at least understandable -- from a certain point of view.

On the other hand, being born in a perfectly normal, healthy middle class family and raised in nice surroundings by understanding and caring parents willing to take the responsibilities raising a child puts on them, providing the kid with everything it needs emotionally as well as physically, a person should normally have no "need" to go to the bad. If a person with a background like this crosses the line, he does

so because he chooses to be bad. He is not driven by things more or less beyond his control; he is into crime because he

(a) wants to get back at his parents for some odd reason (I hate them because they threw out my friend);

(b) is bored and considers a life on the shady side/on the edge adventurous, heroic and exciting -- and maybe as a good ego-booster. (This is often the case with members of youth gangs);

(c) is a psychopath who gets his kicks by abusing other people, animals, etc.;

(d) is a lazy bastard who tries to get through life the "easy" way (i.e., without doing serious work and paying taxes) by robbing, stealing, mugging, defrauding the welfare systems/insurance companies, burglarizing, dealing drugs/illegal guns, etc.

(e) is tied up with a political/religious extremist group and commits crimes (terrorist acts, kidnappings, hijackings, traitory, espionage, sabotage, assassination, etc.) in its favor.

Sounds horrible, does it? So, since I'd rather have my Han being a desperado than a psycho, a terrorist or a petty criminal by his own choosing, I imagine for him a past he doesn't care to remember.

Looking at the listing of his crimes (one official sourcebook from WestEnd Games has it that he's the 4th most wanted man in the galaxy!) -- among them 27 (!) piracies, killings (Greedo, for instance), plus various major crimes against the Empire -- I'd say that, if this Han is a man who has had the chance to lead a perfectly normal life, but chose against it, then he's not a hero, but a sonofabitch to be hated. That's why I try to see him rather as a victim of circumstances than of his own vicious self. Mind you, piracy is -- in real life -- not nearly as heroic/romantic as the swashbuckling movies have it. And smuggling can go from "minor offenses" (smuggling tea, coffee, cigarettes) to serious "major crime" (smuggling drugs, guns, pelts/hides of endangered species, etc.). Killings and woundings can be done in self-defense, but also in cold blood. So we will have to think carefully when tackling the subject if we want to keep Han a basically nice guy and hero of the rebellion.

Did you ever watch *The Frisco Kid*? Harrison stated that the character of Tommy Lillard is actually a parody of Han Solo. So, when Tommy yells at the rabbi, "I'm a bankrobber and a gambler and a whore-monger...", it's actually Han Solo he's referring to.

About writing fanfic in English ... please recon-

sider. Z. P. and I both come from foreign countries and are writing in a language not our "own". Somehow, it works. And we need more good fanfic and bunches of fresh approaches to the old saga.

Tina: Darthie secretly snacking under that helmet?? How's he going to push the chocolate through the "cow catcher" in front of his snoot? Maybe if he uses only chocolate CHIPS?

It is impossible to throw Vader up against a wall and plug him full of holes ... you know, the man just sticks out his hand and simply deflects all the bullets flying at him! Besides, how are you going to throw something of that caliber? With a catapult?

Darth Vader auf Deutsch? Hmm, actually -- there is no translation for this. Darth could be an intentional misspelling of Dark and Vader is Dutch, meaning father. So, it would read "Dark Father". Simple, huh? And that, translated into German, would be: "Dunkler Vater". Which, as you will admit, just doesn't have the same magnificent ring to it. By the way, are you German? You are certainly of German descent, that much is clear. Background info, please!

How many fell asleep reading DFR? At least two -- Leanne and I, as mentioned before. And in volume III, Leia will prick her finger with a rose thorn and everybody in the galaxy will fall into the black sleep of Kali Ma...

Luke does WHAT to his old man? Shoot -- my machine doesn't have slow motion! Now I can't really verify if what you've seen is right. I CAN tell you about all kinds of scenes from big and small screen pix where the hero of the story gets "excited" so much it shows. And this, Leanne Wingo, was your cue ... any comments? Or do you want to discuss the matter in a book store??? (Insider joke, sorry, folks.)

OK, that's it for today. This LoC has gotten a lot longer than what I had intended it to be. Poor, poor Cheree. Forgive me. Puleeezzze!!! (Beg. Whine. Whimper.)

Anyway, loved reading you all and I wish you people a very merry Christmas/Hanakkah/Life Day ... or whatever ... and a great, successful, fun-filled lust-crazed 1993!

Lots of love -- A.G. (Uncle Palpie's Court Jester!)

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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I am afraid this is going to be a long one...

Carolyn Gollidge: Trashing Han. You know, you've never really trashed him at all. I've read stories about Admiral James Stockdale as a prisoner of war and, compared to that, your Han was handled with kid gloves. Stockdale's plane was shot down, he broke a shoulder, dislocated a leg, which later was broken by his interrogator, he spent weeks in a cell, on the floor, without treatment, was beaten for talking to his fellow prisoners, slit his own wrists to convince his abusers that he wouldn't cooperate, slashed his own face to make sure that in photographs he didn't look presentable, and so on. Spent seven years like that. When he came home, he looked like a skeleton. His spirit was never broken. Besides, your Han is wonderful when he is trashed. Forgodsake, no one can live on stories describing Han having breakfast, lunch, dinner and going to sleep! I mean, something must happen, to test him, to push him to the limit, to bring the best out in him. A mild case of the flu just won't do the job.

Marti Schuller: So, you are afraid of flying? Me, too. I have my own secret that gets me through it: never fly sober. Beats holding hands! Eddings? Almost, but not quite. About punishing a Jedi for falling to the Dark Side -- huh? Kenobi had the recipe: lava pit! If that didn't work, take his son and get him to kill Daddy.

MaggieNo: I refuse to believe that anyone could be a ST fan and say that Amanda was guilty of bestiality because Sarek was not created in God's image. What are fundamentalists watching ST for, anyway? The SW fandom chronology zine is a great idea! I missed the golden days and I'd like to know about them! Hey, what am I saying? THESE are the golden days!

Tammy Olsen: Huh? I hope your letter is different from all the others. That's what letters are for! Come to MWC -- you'll see how different everybody is.

Everybody: Dark Horse Comics accepts subscriptions and sends all issues at once!!! MUST for all of you! Not just the comics, but the incredible amount of info on the Dark Side, the Jedi past, Palpie, etc. Next year, they will make a series about old Jedi legends! Will make you dizzy!

Mary Jo Fox: I don't think Leia was a virgin. I kind of like the stories where she is a very sophisticated, experienced princess, but selective enough to keep Han at arm's length, until she is ready. Yeah, Luke is grand when he is dark and threatening and desperate -- as long as I know that his ultimate goal is to destroy Palpatine. He has a beautifully noble and darkly suicidal attitude in the comics! Love those blazing eyes!

Catriona Campbell: See above. Re: Mary Sue, yes, one sort of becomes very timid with those female characters. Illos for "Missing" -- Churko made some, for the fun of it. Ask her to show it to you. I've seen them (brag, brag). As for Kenobi being a fallible human being, uh, how fallible is grooming a wide-eyed boy to be his father's murderer? I call it cold-blooded political manipulation. A more personal note: People are touching you because they like you. Human beings die without being touched (newborns and old people actually do!). Touch and live longer, you'll have more time to write stories like "Missing."

Debbie Kittle: The Death Star must have had a black box, or instant communication with the nearest Imp center. I am sure Luke's happy entrance to Leia's cell was broadcast all over the place.

A. G. Steyn: On editing. There is a tremendous difference between American and European ideas about the art of writing. Where I come from -- and I guess, it's not far from where A. G. comes from -- a writer is a direct channel between the Divine and the Masses, a kind of sacred fool, whose words can not be altered. Whereas in the USA, a writer is a professional, who skillfully creates a marketable commodity. If it requires alterations, one can assume that the editor does her best to improve the story. After all, she has to sell the stuff! This is the business part of it.

There is a fairness part, as well. It is the editor who provides the sandbox (her sweat and blood and printer and time and grocery money); she should have the right to say, "Okay, you can build your sandcastles in my sandbox, but I don't want to get it muddy, so please no wet stuff." The editor gives a kind of profile to a zine and, if it's a Lukezine, why not say, "Please, no Han stories"? Nothing wrong with a zine having its own character and style. Of course, a major change would require the author's permission (for example, if the editor wants to change a passionate kiss to a resounding slap!), but you'll always find an editor who accepts your story without major changes.

For the record, I do enjoy heavy erotica, unex-

plored interracial, interspecies sexual adventures, including slash, provided it is well written. But there is as much excitement in exploring the "luminous being" as in fondling the "crude matter", so I don't mind going either way! I was toying with plans of making a SW zine in defiance of the "Lucas Purity Policy" (I planned to call it "The Rest of the Garbage") and I found out that the idea was highly unpopular. Think of it, A.G., we write because we want people to read it happily, not because we want to ram it down their throats.

Another thing for the record -- I had the pleasure of reading A.G.'s stuff both in *Tremor* and in the original form and I must say that the changes were either very minor or necessary. In all my "career" as a SW fan writer, I've felt only once that my story was over-edited, and not by Cheree, either. IMO, Cheree's touch on my stories was light and very helpful (I got compliments on sentences that *she* changed for the better! Boy, was I embarrassed...).

Sandi Jones: Thanks a million for the editing offer. I take it! As for you being a hopeless romantic, well, the Shauni-romances are everything but hopeless! And about that Churko drawing-story, get cracking, 'cause mine is all done!

Tim Blaes: Absolutely! A Jedi in bed might be too intense for his own good and for his partner: his sensitivity would make him the perfect lover and then he'd need a baseball bat to beat all those swooning girls off himself! Rather have a few and far between, some special ladies who can handle it.

Kathy Agel: I take you at your word, too. Just wait. Mutant Ninja Editor? Great name!

Anne-Virginie Dutech: Bienvenue! And don't tell me that writing in a foreign language is a source of headache and frustration. It's more like navigating an asteroid field with your shields down -- exhilarating! (My compliments on your wonderful dark story in *From a Certain Point of View* #5! Got me right in the guts!) I loved your ideas on communication frequencies! There must be a story in that (Chewie having a chat with the Emperor, due to a frequency foul-up?). If you go to Scotland to see Campbell, please hug her for me. I loved "Missing". Radio tapes: best and closest source for you is Cloud City (Fiorenzo Delle Rupi) in Italy.

Cheryl Pryor: I am not going to MWC as Yoda, period. That green mask would cover my mouth and then how could I talk you guys to death?

Tina Bentrup: rote 2 letres 2 yoo, yoo never

ansred, eh? Ah never trust a bule Jawa agin! Besides, Luke nicks Vader on the right shoulder, or else my copy is not the same as yours.

Last words: Lucas said (in the club newsletter) that he is going to do the first three movies, filmed back to back, between 1995 and 2000, we should all live that long. It will be aimed at the 14-or-so audience, like the previous ones, and it will be about Anakin and Kenobi.

Bye, now! I love you all (I hope you'd all say, "I know!")!

SW Collecting Special

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November 4, 1992

Did any of you see the SW Collecting Special on October 28 on the QVC Shopping Network? I got the Lucasfilm Magazine announcing the program only days before it aired. That didn't give me much time to find someone who got the station. One day before, I found someone! So I went to her house (it was a friend of my mother's) and sat in front of her TV from 10pm-12 am. It was a great program and Mark Hamill made it even better!

Z. P. Florian: I love the idea of Luke at a state dinner. What a great story this would make.

I don't think much of Vader's body survived the "volcano". Therefore, he doesn't have the right equipment! In my opinion. I think the Force can only be controlled well by certain families and others must be trained to see if they could possibly use the Force. This includes members of families who don't know they have the Force.

Macaulay Culkin playing a young Luke!! Oh, gods, I hope not.

Lisa Cowan: I always enjoy reading your articles on SW.

Mary Jo Fox: I disagree! Jedis make better lovers.

Jennifer Moore: I think Ben truly loved and

cared for Luke and by giving his life in front of Luke, I think he was showing Luke and giving him more reasons to go after Vader.

Catriona Campbell: I have not read the definition of a "Mary Sue". Most of the stories I write have Luke with a girl. I don't care if people think I am putting myself in the girl's place, which, by the way, I am not. I just don't see many stories about this subject. That's why I write so many of them. I would love to read some of your "Luke and the girl" stories.

Have you heard about the SW saga being released in letterbox in November? ((Ed: Hey, how does everyone feel about letterbox format? Personally, I hate it. I always feel like I'm sitting in the ninth balcony and need binoculars to see it!))

That's all for now. Have a wonderful holiday. May the Force be with you! Walk the Sky!

Trashing

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November 6, 1992

Hi! And thank you all for your warm welcome. I feel like I've finally found and joined the "family" I had observed from afar for so long! I'm just trying to work out why it took me so long to add my voice!

Carolyn Golledge: Hello again! It's been a while since we traded letters! As for your question asking why some people dislike "trashing" so much, well, I can only speak for myself (and I speak as one who has "trashed" and may "trash" again) and that is to say that it depends on how the said "trashing" is done and for what reason! If it is in the story as a plot device and if the character grows and deepens from the experience, then, so be it. However, if the story is primarily in existence as a vehicle for the author to "trash" her favorite character, then I sometimes get a little tired, but that doesn't stop me from enjoying a well-written tale!

I suppose I'm saying that I quite like some tales which include a bit of character bashing -- and why

not? I guess it comes down to human behavior and psyche. Why do we enjoy seeing our heroes suffer? Why do we enjoy exploring the darkness within ourselves? I'm constantly fascinated by the "evil" in the human race and the reason why one human would hurt another... Is there a psychiatrist in the house?

Z. P. Florian: Re: faith and the Force. I think the "faith" aspect has to do with believing in oneself. If you do not believe you can achieve something, then usually you don't. In TESB, Luke lacked the faith in himself and the power he held when Yoda told him to lift his own ship. He couldn't do it because he didn't BELIEVE! Belief is faith.

From what Lisa Cowan has told me, the Macauley Culkin report is a rumor, though it came from the BBC!

Where did I learn so much about torture? Research! I read a couple of articles/stories in magazines written by torture victims. At the time of writing those scenes, there were a couple of documentaries on TV about torture and the effects on the victims, the guards and the torturers themselves. It was all very horrific and interesting. Many of the characters' reactions were based on those programs so I could portray them as realistically as possible -- none of this "stiff upper lip, old chap" or "don't let them hear you scream". In reality, that's not how it happens. (By the way, keep your eyes open for stories by Louise Turner -- if I can ever get her to submit anywhere. She has a novel-length tale called "The Ormand Factor" which I think would appeal to you. She's a Wedge fan, but she enjoys putting Luke through the grindstone, too!)

While I'm here, thank you for your kind words about "Missing." I'm pleased you enjoyed it and your comments meant a lot to me.

Marti: Loved your idea that Macauley Culkin could play a young Palpatine! Wicked, but wonderful!

Now for your question re Dark Jedi. You've asked me this before and I'm trying to remember how I answered it then, but this is my thoughts now: You're right; imprisonment wouldn't work and execution is of the darkside. Perhaps they let them run around freely thinking that by sheer force (sorry) of numbers, they could control them. Thus, they allowed the Dark Side to grow! Look at today's Satanists and Black Magic believers -- people laugh at them!

However, I really tend to believe they did execute Dark Siders and then tried to justify it by being all righteous. Look at how the Christians slaughtered

thousands during the Crusades in the name of Christ, just because they didn't share the same believe/faith.

While I'm here, I have to say in public how excellent your story "The Invitation" is! A definite MUST READ for Luke/Vader fans!

Maggie Nowakowska: I'll definitely be interested in reading your History of SW Fanzine Fandom -- primarily because I missed out on it all (being stuck in the Scottish backwaters) and because I do not believe British fandom can boast of such a "colorful" history. To be honest, I don't think British fandom HAS a history -- yet!

Tammy Olsen: Welcome, from one new contributor to another! I liked your assessment of the girl Luke should get/have.

Mary Jo Fox: I can understand why you'd rather NOT see another SW movie, but I don't feel the same. I AM nervous about the prospect, though!

All: Are fans becoming too hard to please? Have we become too wrapped up in our own fan fiction to accept anything Lucasfilm could give us? Many of us dislike the books, the comics don't suit us all... Just how would another film be received? Perhaps our expectations are too high?

Saying that, though, and after reading the most recent Lucasfilm magazine, I have to admit that I don't really want to see a movie about Kenobi and Anakin and what went before. I've read too many excellent stories on that subject and feel it's been done! Lucas would have to find something extraordinary to please me! See what I mean about expectations? (*Ed: This exact thing happened with ROTJ. After TESB, SW fandom just exploded and for three years wonderful stories poured out of the imaginations of the best writers in fandom. Some were so logical and well-written that many fans said, "Yes, this must be how it will be resolved." Then, when ROTJ appeared, many fans were disappointed because the film just wasn't as good as some of the fan stories!*)

Debbie Kittle: Re *Dark Force Rising*. It was an "okay" book which was definitely better than the first - but I've read better fan stories! 'Sides, Zahn portrays Luke as a "right poltice" (Scot's slang from this area, meaning "wimp") and that sits rough with me.

A. G. Steyn: I agree with most of your comments concerning stories and editors. I don't mind editors changing my English words into American English, I don't mind them correcting my often deplorable grammar, I don't mind them making small word changes if

it helps the story. I've been lucky so far that no one has hacked into anything I've done and the editors of the zines I've contributed to have been kind. However, I do get annoyed when a sentence's meaning is changed and this has happened to me a couple of times. I *do* think editors should consult the authors if major changes are required. It should be negotiable, and the author should be the one to make the changes if she/he is willing. If not, then it's simple to withdraw a story.

It can hurt when you see a passage that you've sweated over has been altered. So editors, be kind -- we writers are sensitive beings!

Re: Owen's "There'll be hell to pay." I agree that was just his way of saying Luke'll regret not doing what he was supposed to. However, I don't agree that will mean some form of punishment. I just don't see Owen in that light, at all! As I've said before, he's a rough and gruff man -- but not a cruel man. I think Luke would just be in for a good "bawling out" as we say here! My father would often make idle threats to make us move, e.g., "If you don't tidy your room, you'll regret it." Nothing ever happens!

I see Owen as a man of deep feeling, a man who has carried a heavy burden, who has tried to act correctly for Luke's sake and he has instilled those feelings in his nephew. Luke hasn't stayed on the farm because he's under Owen's boot. He's stayed on the farm out of love and loyalty. Owen's fault here is that, to keep Luke safe, to keep the boy he loves and who he doesn't want to lose, was to USE Luke's feelings against him. Hence, the reference to the harvest. Owen is essentially saying, "We need you!" Owen is afraid of many things.

A question: Why, if Owen was a cruel, tyrannical man, is Luke so afraid when he realizes the stormtroopers are headed to the farm? Who is the first person he shouts for when he reaches the farm?

Sandi Jones: Hello, again! I'm happy to hear you're back into the writing mode! I also hope your health has improved and wish you well.

I've never seen an ANH where Luke has to make two passes at the Death Star. It sounds interesting, though! I do think I've seen a different ROTJ, though! In this one when Daddy Darth threatens Luke with turning Leia, Luke jumps out from his hiding place and swings the saber around his head, then dives for Vader. In the copies I've seen since, Luke just jumps up and dives for Dad. Anyone else seen this or were my friend and I dreaming?

Matthew Whitney: I've never seen varying differences in TESB (the movie I know has always had Han and Leia watching from an observation room, and the end dialogue) -- except one which was shown on TV. The whole Hoth scene with Leia, droids, Chewie and Rebels and the closing of the cavern doors was missing. I have a feeling the TV station cut it to fit their schedules, though, as the next time it was shown, the movie was whole. It's all very strange, though!

Tim Blaes: I assume, when you spoke of a "belted plaid", that you meant a type of tartan kilt? I've seen the "close the blast doors" scene differences -- it's more fun when the trooper replies, "Open the blast doors!"

UK version of TESB longer? Do you know in which scenes? When I visited Marti in 1986, we watched the movies together and I never noticed any differences. If you have a VCR which can take UK tapes or know someone who can convert UK to US, perhaps I could send you a copy?

Hey, I liked your thoughts on Jedi lovemaking! 'Nuff said!

Cheryl Pryor: My initials are C.M.W. -- makes more sense to write my name if you ask me!

Anne-Virginie: Mum, Dad and I thank you for the gorgeous flowers!! We all hope you enjoyed your visit with us as much as we did! Hamish (the dog) missed you after you left! I'm only sorry the Scottish weather was as cold and wet as ever! You are welcome to return any time!

I think it can be argued that Luke and Leia share a "link" which was established before birth. I believe research into twins (including fraternal twins) has shown (not proven, mind you) that there can be unexplained links between siblings, e.g., knowing if the other is hurt in some way. 'Sides, they also have the added link in the Force!

I do agree that much of a child's values, etc., comes from his/her upbringing and not necessarily from genetic links. However, speaking as one who never knew her birth parents and who was raised by foster parents, I don't think genetic roots can be dismissed. There is much about me that my parents find "alien" and which I have since discovered come from my genetic roots -- my tendency to be a dreamer and my writing are just two examples.

Tina Bentrup: You get "Morse" in the US? Wow, I'm quietly stunned! I just watched that episode with Ian McDiarmid last week when it was rerun! Did you know he was Scottish? As is Denis Lawson who

played Wedge (he was born in Perth) and Alex McCrindle who played Dodonna.

A thought before I go. Friends and I were pondering this one a couple of evenings ago: What if the Clone Wars were not a reference to a battle over cloning and its technology as we all believe, but actually a reference to a PLACE where a huge war was fought? You know, "the Clone System"? Not really a possibility, I know, but it was fun thinking about it!

Before I close, may I say that I hope your choice for a new President works out for your country and that Clinton works for you instead of against you, as our Conservative government has been doing for the past 13 years!

My apologies to Cheree for such a long letter! I tried to keep it short and missed out several items I wanted to talk about in my vain attempt at brevity! This is just so much fun, though!

High Points

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November 9, 1992

Nine years, huh? Congratulations on not only keeping it going for that length of time but for doing such an excellent job at it. You deserve a lot more than a pat on the back! It was a lot of fun to read what was going on back then. Seemed strange to see so many zines listed as available when they are out of print now. Yes, by all means, recap what was going on in future issues. It's fun to look back.

The new MW pix were wonderful. Made me relive the whole thing all over again! And wish the next MW was a LOT sooner. Also loved the photo of Nora and Oz because we both share an interest in Arabians (I own 2). And the photo of A.G. It's nice to be able to put a face to a name.

I am assuming that everyone has read in the Lucasfilm Fan Club Newsletter the interview with

George Lucas saying that 3 new SW movies will be made and released between 1995 and the year 2000! I'm sure all of us hate waiting that long but it sure is preferable to them not coming out at all.

Has been a busy year for me and I'm sorry that I haven't written as much as I would have liked to but will try to do better in the future. Part of the problem this year was the fact that the doctors told me early in the year that my back problem is NOT going to go away and, in fact, in time, will only get worse. I don't ride my older Arabian much (he's going on 30!!) but I do ride the younger one who has a very annoying habit of spooking all the time. We discovered that my back got worse when I rode him because I stiffened all the time anticipating his spooking. I rode my friend's Quarter Horse mare and found it didn't aggravate my back at all. So, I bought a Quarter Horse gelding. My friend and I did a LOT of showing this year and I haven't done that in years, so it meant that I had to go shopping for new show clothes, do a lot more riding and since we showed out of town most of the time, it meant packing and unpacking. Most of the shows were 3 day shows so we would go a day early and come home a day later. We had a lot of fun and I enjoyed every minute of it but it is exhausting. We just attended our club's banquet and I won three High Points! Not bad on a horse that I bought right after MW!!

Cheree: I enjoyed *Dark Force Rising* more, too. In fact, I had a lot of trouble finishing *Heir to the Empire*.

Nora Mayers: Ozzie is beautiful but I want to see that photo in color! As for Pern, it's great! I belong to several Weyrs (as does Kathy Agel). Contact either of us and we can get you involved.

Z. P. Florian: Would have liked to have seen you throw yourself at Mary Urhausen's feet to do another WC. Of course, I probably would have joined you!

Marti Schuller: Thanks for the kind words. It was a lot of work but it was really nice to hear so many comments at MW that the ceremony was one of the best things they attended. Hope next year's will go as well. If you're rooming with non-smokers, come and join me on the hall floor or visit Z.P.'s room. She smokes, too!

Maggie Nowakowska: I, personally, would LOVE to read your SW Fanzine Fan History. Having gotten into SW late, there is so much that I have heard about and don't understand like the Church of Ford/Cathedral of Luke. Unfortunately, I think that one is still

around to some degree. Yes, by all means, try to get a panel on it for MW. I'll come!

Tammy Olsen: Welcome! You got to go to the Olympics? How wonderful! I had to suffice watching them on TV. If you can get away over Memorial Day weekend, come to MW -- it's great! SW is one of the biggest (if not THE biggest) contingents there.

Debbie Kittle: Glad you had a good time at MW. You were a super roomie and I loved your dolls (and I'm going to steal your blue firelizard yet!). I, too, hope that everyone will vote for the 1992 STAR aWARDs. Even if you haven't read every zine on the list, vote for what you have read. It is another way of saying "thanks" to those who have worked so hard to take you out of your mundane life for a short time.

A. G. Steyn: Now, would I be so mean as to sic Darthie on you? I have been in contact with a guy in England who has been so kind as to send me a list of all the SW fan clubs in Europe that he knows about. I got a *beautiful* zine/newsletter from Germany. Unfortunately, it is written in German and I have enough trouble with English! To be honest, I was amazed at how many clubs there are that we knew nothing about.

Sandi Jones: Welcome. You must come to MW -- I drive there and we live so close -- if you need a ride, you're more than welcome to come along with me. By the way, I was glad to take a certain Aussie Corellian off your hands -- we talked far, far into the night (and went to see *Patriot Games*).

Michelle Malkin: Will look forward to meeting you at MW.

Kathy Agel: Yeah, well, I didn't think that it would sound too good if I said you nearly knocked over the table!! Glad to hear the award is hanging (that is, if you finally tore your hubby away from the golf). He should meet my son who's a golf pro!! I know -- I know -- I SHOULD write a SW story -- I'll try; maybe not for this issue of A&E, though!

I am not going to comment on A.G.'s subject of zine editing. I am neither an editor nor a SW writer. I have only written one fiction thing and the editors of that zine went out of their way to help me make my story better. They consulted with me on every change. For me, it was a good experience. I am sure that there will be a LOT in this issue of SE regarding this subject!! Only I hope that it will turn out to be a controversy and not an all-out war!!

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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November 19, 1992

I'm back! Did you miss me? (Never mind -- don't answer that!)

Carolyn Golledge: It is certainly true that George Lucas is not a god (none of us are perfect), but neither is he a louse, as some have suggested. As for success being a group effort, it certainly is, but when there are failures with Lucas' name attached, guess who gets blamed? Maybe it all comes out even. The people who are the *real* unsung heroes of films are all those names you see when the credits roll.

Yes, Nora Mayers, I know who Khemosabi is, as well as Count D'orsasz (whom I saw at the ripe old age of 33), Witez II, and the great Sakr. If you know of a *good* Arabian breed journal, let me know.

Marti Schuller: I loved both the Belgariad and the Malloreon. I have also read two-thirds of the Ellanium, and understood that Eddings is starting yet *another* series. I have read a lot of the Dragonlance books, but am hopelessly behind at this point.

What about exile or banishment for Dark Jedi?

Regarding *Cinefantastique*: The last straw for me was when they gave away the plot of JEDI without so much as a by-your-leave. They can write whatever they please; I don't care. Besides, they trashed both TESB and ROTJ, so why would they want more films?

The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles are excellent. Too bad they are getting bounced around because of football. Our local station is running the program at 1:30 a.m. on Sunday, unless, of course, they don't run it at all, or they run it on Saturday. Sigh... ((Ed: Does anyone have a VHS copy of the last broadcast episode, the one with 10-year-old Indy and the princess? Our local station pre-empted it for a Ross Perot infomercial! Can I trade anyone something for a copy of it?))

A. G. Steyn: Lucas (has) "got to follow his own path. No one can choose it for him." Ha, ha!

I assume everyone has seen or now owns the SW trilogy in letterbox.

Speaking for myself, I've enjoyed both SW novels. I would like to see more expression of affection between Han and Leia -- if they ever get back toge-

ther, that is! Cheree: Your daughter has a lovely smile. She needs to broaden it just a bit! My best wishes to everyone for a safe and happy holiday season. May the new year bring peace and justice for all.

My Darkling Palpatine...

Fiorenzo Delle Rupi
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Oh, my Darkling, oh my Darkling, oh my Darkling Palpatine...

Hello, everybody! Why spend the whole afternoon meditating on the *Dark Empire* comics when I can turn on the computer and plague all of you as well?

Issue six hasn't come out yet, although by the time you read this, we'll know how the end is and I will be sobbing over Palpie's (new) demise, unless Tom Veitch feels like he needs Yellow Eyes for the sequel to *Dark Empire II*, in which case I probably won't survive until summer 1993, so let's take the chance now that he's still alive and cackling.

There are almost no flaws in the comics: the story is very good, the characters are faithful (come on, admit it, Luke has never been more interesting than in this story!), and the drawings are breathtaking. There are two small faults which, however, do not bother the reader a lot. One is Boba Fett's return. I don't find it impossible, and it is mostly welcome, because Boba's end in ROTJ was just too stupid to be true. But it should at least have a function in the story! Boba pops out, he says he's alive, pursues Solo until Byss' planetary shield, where he accelerates in hope of passing through (a/k/a the red traffic light syndrome) and, of course, he remains cut out (as above). And that's all. What does it mean, what function does it have in the story??

The second is Han. As in ROTJ, he has very

little room for himself and comes out a little dumb; he is always the one that does not understand what's going on. A pity.

Good aspects, anyway, are just too much to write down. Leia's role is perfect, the cloning is intriguing, Palpie is in great shape... Wow! *Dark Empire* is so far the only story I've read 5 parts of 6 without being capable of imagining how it will end. Great!

Now, about the "clone you love to hate": Palpie is young again. What does it mean? It means a lot of things! Is the face of the young Emperor the same face we will see in the 1st trilogy? A Rutger Hauer halfway between *Blade Runner* and *Ladyhawke*, maybe? Sounds great to me, but how can Cam Kennedy know the looks of the young Emperor, I wonder?

Also, is Uncle Palpie human or not? Those green spots are a consequence of cloning, or is that the look of his particular race? But what's worse is that in the young adult series, we come to know that Palpatine has a son, Trioculus (yech, what a name)!! This is rather upsetting, because it implies that the Imperial Throne does not go to me, and also because it makes Palpatine a normal human. Hell, any ideas on who can really be my uncle??

Okay, let's go to safer (so to speak) grounds -- *Dark Force Rising*. I would place it below *Heir to the Empire*, although I admit that Zahn is working very well to make a promising third book. That's where all the loose ends are going to be tied up (hopefully) and that one promises to be very good. But DFR is a little boring. The fact is that SW is a too-fast-paced story to be told in a novel of over 350 pages. It comes out too slowly. I think that the main characters were very well depicted and, of the new ones, Thrawn and Karrde were very good. But I swore when I read that Luke had saved Mara's life at the end of the book. Couldn't we have a third book without that jittery presence walking around feeling voices in the head like Jeanne d'Arc and pestering everyone she managed to meet? I don't particularly like C'Baath, because I can't get a grip on the character, but I cheered when he started throwing boulders at Mara's ship. And, speaking of C'Baath, what do you think of the Forum scenes? (Here in Italy, there is a transmission in which a judge is called to decide about quarreling farmers, neighbors, and so on; when I read that scene, I immediately thought about it). Also, I don't very much like the way Leia manages to resolve in one single chapter all the obstacles that Thrawn had put around her. The line in which she says, "I

will leave the *Falcon* on Endor and head straight for Coruscant" was too much to believe. All in all, I find it an average story. It promises an exciting finale, but it is nothing that can be compared to *Dark Empire*.

Now, for some LoCs...

A. G. Steyn and Cheree Cargill: About the "to edit or not to edit" matter... Honestly, that's a complex problem and what I'm going to write is just the way I deal with the problem in running *Cloud City*. I am not aware of what's going on in the USA, but I did have this kind of experience over here, so I'll just offer it, without the intention of offending or siding up with anybody. Let's go.

The Force knows how much I would have liked to destr-- ahem, to correct some contributions I was sent, but, truly, I never have. There is a little voice within me that pops up and says, "You are not going to print that stuff in your zine, are you?" but there's always another that says, "Well, who are you to decide it?"

The fact is that sometimes I'd like to be something more than the guy who spends his days typing at the computer or running to the printer and to the post office. I don't want to be a censor, but I'd feel it was a duty towards my readers to guarantee that what they're reading is of a certain quality. I'd like to have people think "Ah, *Cloud City* -- they publish good stuff."

But that is *not* the right way. I have never and I will never go beyond the grammar corrections in the stories I publish.

To start that kind of talk is to start down a dangerous -- and alas, a much too crowded, at least over here -- path (well, just look what you're making me do. I'm even quoting Yoda. Yeech!). First is the story that needs a fix. Then it's that LoC that's a little too harsh. Then it's that particular author that seems always to write in a way I dislike. Then it's all a group of authors that actually follows a trend I personally don't like. Then it's a whole group of fans, then it's a whole zine or a whole fan club, then it's all the world. I, and only I, have absolute power: this is my zine and whoever enters it must accept my rules!

Believe me, I know this kind of talk much too well to go for it. There are several points that this kind of talk does not take into account.

First, the aim and the reason to do a zine. This is maybe felt more strongly in *Cloud City's* case because, aside from a zine, it is also a fan club, but I think it works for zines, too. Honestly, the only

worthy aim of a zine and the only rightful one is that of having fun.

Of course, fun is not circumvented to the editor's world (on the contrary, he is usually the one that does not have fun at all) but to the contributors and writers as well.

If a writer sends a story, unless it really stinks or unless it is openly offensive, he should have good chances of seeing it printed. Maybe it's not a masterpiece, maybe it's not that good, but the trade is: the joy of seeing someone's own work published with the uncertain result of having the reader bothered when reading that particular page. It's a very low price to pay. If I refuse or alter all works under a certain line of quality, maybe I'll have a superzine of mega tales. My ego is satisfied, but 70% of my readers/rejected contributors will not have much fun with it. Would-be writers are already doomed to know that Bantam, Ballantine, Dark Horse, West End, etc., will not even accept to read a line of theirs. They should not be reserved this treatment on zines, too.

Second, by acting as a censor, one of the most serious sins of the editor comes to light: the low opinion he has of his readers. By refusing, cutting, correcting a (relatively) average story, the editor thinks, "They are not capable of telling a good story from a bad one. I must choose for them." This is the worst offense an editor can do to his readers. Sometimes I will receive contributions so disgusting that can't be reasonably printed. In that case, I will say to the author, "Look, the matter is that X and Y are much too wrong and cannot possibly go well." In 70% of cases, the involved person will say, "Yeah, you're right. I will rewrite it." In 25% of the cases, he/she will answer, "Sorry, but that's an integral part of my idea and must remain that way" (in this case, I will publish the thing as it is, reserving myself the pleasure of saying, "Well, I did warn you"). And in 5% of cases, the person will no longer want to have his contribution appear because he feels insulted, he intends to rewrite everything from the start or he intends to send it to someone else. Very well, this is a free country. But if you have no choice between publishing the story/artwork/review/club advertisement as it is or refusing it, go ahead and publish it. Readers are not stupid and will notice it; they will send LoCs saying, "Hey, that was junk." They certainly won't send letters saying, "Hey, you editor, why did you allow that stuff to appear?" I assure you, readers will never encourage the editor along that

way! And, even in that case, I prefer being accused of lack of vision instead of censorship.

Third, and most important, this might come as a shock to someone, but editors aren't always right. True, we've read more stories than the contributor, true, we've a better experience in these things, but this cannot beget that our idea is better than his. To my surprise (and dismay), I have more than once reluctantly published something I thought would stink and then found out that it was what readers enjoyed most, and so there have been contributions I considered masterpieces that turned out to be failures according to my readers' tastes. But thank the Maker it is so! If I had to publish only what I like, I would get a zine in which even Artoo and Threepio turn to the Dark Side, Palpatine reigns unchallenged over this, and several other galaxies, and a chemical weapon has provoked the extinction of all the Ewoks in the universe. Once again, the only judgment that counts is that of the public, and you can't foresee it, no matter how experienced you are.

But from what I understand, the heart of the problem concerns changes made without the author's permission. Well, after all this you will understand that this is pure violence over someone's ideas. If I really think that that sentence/paragraph/idea is wrong and must not appear (and after all that we have said I shouldn't), well, then I don't publish it, but publishing it altered without asking the author is criminal. That's putting in the mouth of the author words and ideas he has never meant to express. Very often, he meant to express the precise opposite idea. Why, if this is right, then in the next issue of CC, there are gonna be tons of LoCs singing choruses of glory to my person, cheering my works and congratulating my activities, no matter what the authors truly sent.

Honestly, I see the matter on this point quite obvious, and I don't even think there should be need to discuss it, so maybe I'm missing some details I should know. In this case, please, fill in the blank.

Carolyn Golledge: Hi! Is everything well over there? Here things have improved a little, hope they proceed well for you, too. Thanks also for your words of praise about our work; they are always good to hear once in a while.

Well, well, it looks like you're another Mara Jade fan, huh? Glad to hear that. What I really wish to know after this is: Is there anybody who can stand that obnoxious paranoid? If yes, can you please explain why to us? Maybe we're missing something

and she has some hidden (very, very, very hidden) qualities. The Right Hand of the Emperor... Ha! Imagine Uncle Palpie discussing some secret plan with her. "You will go and kill that Admiral. He's a traitor." "Yes, Your Majesty." Change scene, Mara with the Admiral. "Yes, I hate you, blah, blah, blah, I must kill you, blah, blah, blah. I had the order to kill you from the Emperor himself who blah blah blah and so I now will kill you blah blah blah because that's the will of my Master blah blah blah (ten minutes), say, did you know you're very attractive?"

Lisa Cowan: You didn't miss anything!

Z. P. Florian: About Luke getting a girl. I think you made a very good point. Who can measure up with Leia? That's it, not because of any particular qualities of Leia, but because of the other factors you mentioned, that is, Luke's fast growth. Whatever woman you put next to him cannot fit well because it will always have to be some new character. On the contrary, there should be someone next to him that has gone through his growth along with him and Leia was the only one to fit the place. Any other woman who's going to pop out after ROTJ to get Luke will always carry a writing on her T-shirt, "I am the girl for

Luke" from the beginning. It would have been easier if there had been someone else in the trilogy who took part in the events. Er, maybe a passionate story about Mon Mothma?

Debbie Kittle (and everybody): Is it commonly accepted that Vader and Tarkin did not like each other? I have always thought they worked very well together; with nobody else, not even the Emperor, Vader discusses which is the best course of action. They exchange ideas and they do not seem too uneasy in each other's presence. Maybe I'm just imagining things but I've always thought that Vader esteemed Tarkin very much. Anyone agree?

Cheryl Pryor: Hey, come on, be kind towards old people! It was since issue 2 of *Dark Empire* that Palpie had come back and he had never had a cover! It was about time!

Before leaving, is anyone over there into Marvel comics? Does anyone think that Doctor Doom is Vader's twin brother? And that Loki would be a perfect young Emperor?

Okay, time to go. May I include *Cloud City's* last year Christmas card here, Cheree?



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November 21, 1992

Hey, I'm back! What do you mean you didn't miss me? I'm devastated! Oh, well. I have managed to misplace just about everything in the Library and my work room. I *really* do not suggest to anyone that they have 2 computer failures, 2 printer failures and a copy failure and a phone cut off in one 5 month period. It really does tend to upset a schedule and drive one into irreversible depression, but if the Force is with me, I am finally crawling out of the mess -- just in time to get involved in the author vs. editor fun.

For old hands in SW, this is not the first time this has occurred, but as it is probably new to many fans, I do think it needs to be discussed. So, Point A, Steyn is right, and Point A, *Cheree is right*. No, I did not mean Point 1 and 2 or Point A and B. Because depending on where you stand, they both have very valid things to say and, as both an editor and an author, I can recognize the frustration on both sides, but perhaps in this there is a third party that needs to be recognized and it is that third party that in the long run dictates what an editor will print and therefore what will be acceptable from an author. That third party is the reader!

Now, as 90% of the editors have outlines of what they want, the authors should have no complaint if they center a story around Z when all the editor wants are stories centered around X and C, or alternate universe, or women only, or anything else of this type. If you as an author do not want to write such stories, do not send them to that particular editor.

Like the authors, the editors (even if they try to be objective) have certain biases. They also have individual ways of handling editing.

The first words on my editing outline are "all material is subject to edit". The amount of editing done will depend on the story and the ability of the author. There are perhaps 5 or 6 authors who never need editing in any way, others than need merely suggestions for deleting or additions, and others who need to do complete rewrites.

It is the editor's *job* to make decisions like that. How closely the editors and authors work together seems to be the key. Some editors just take the bit and run and, if they get a good product that way, that

is the way they will do it. Others work more closely with the authors on changes and restructures. And sometimes no matter how hard they try, one combination cannot make a story work. This has nothing to do with the quality of the story. It simply involves the human differences in people. With another editor, the author would find the same story working fine.

I would say the bottom line in things like this is for authors to try and know your editors and how they work, and for editors to try and know your authors and how they feel about changes, etc., in their work.

In *Bright Center* in just 3 issues, I have had to turn back 2 stories, not because the stories were bad, but I could not make them work. There were elements in the stories that were important to the authors but I could not get the elements to gel. Other editors did. I have made suggestions on another couple of stories, some of which were accepted. Where there is a difference of opinion, I am very careful to examine the situation. If I can work with it, fine; if not, I will return the story.

Below the bottom line is the fact that in fanzines, most materials are the hard work of imaginative authors, artists, poets, and puzzle makers, but the editor is responsible for getting these materials together and presenting them to the public and standing the expense of putting out the zine. The reading fans will decide if the zine is worth the price they will be asked to pay.

So, it is necessary for all sides to decide what the final purpose of this creative product is, and what needs to be done to make it saleable.

Enough. Now to other things.

C. Golledge: Yeah, lady, I agree with you on the Lucas as god. The man was brilliant on promoting SW, then he just left it to others to carry the ball. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Lucasfilm Fan Club zine #17. The interview supposedly focused on SW but had only about three paragraphs on SW. The rest was on his other projects and the Young Indy series. So, I agree with you all the way.

Nora Mayers: Okay, lady, I want to read that SW novel when you get it out. October '92, right? And, as for Indy (Old, that is), yep, charming and that is it. Except where he used his cane in the episode with the smart-mouthed counter brat. I can't find the Indy I know anywhere.

Z. P. Florian: About the only thing we seem to know about spice is that it is mined (C3PO's reference to the spice mines of Kessel). Hey! Ming said-- Just

because I twist other people's arms to have them do things (talk to Judy about that), but I do think it is a great idea. Show the rest of fandom what you girls can do.

Can't agree with you that Owen slapped Luke around or that Beru was scared of him. Beru struck me more as the type of woman my Grandma was said to be, very quiet and shy, until she would say, "We will do this!" As I understand, it was very quiet, but it was also done. I believe Luke is much the same.

Maggie N.: Yes, we need someone to resurrect and record the old info on the early zines. I am all for it and, if I can help, let me know.

Tammy Olson: Keep up the letters and make it to MediaWest as soon as you can. It is great.

Mary Jo Fox: Gothic Girl. I love it and join the group. Ben -- Machiavellian -- I have always felt both he and Yoda were between a rock and a hard place. The only one they had to send up against Vader happened to be Vader's son, so what do you do? I think one of the problems in SW is we want the Alliance and the New Republic to be Good. We forget that good has different meanings to different people. Is the greater good always the best for individuals? Was Kenobi bad because he wanted to use the only weapon available to defeat Vader? Was Luke ever to know Vader was his father? Or, did Kenobi think Luke would never find out, and would he have found out if Vader had not told him? A lot of food for thought here.

Debbie Kittle: Well, the Lucas interview turned out to be a bust. As for the comics, very nice. I was especially interested in the reissue of the comics that were originally in the newspapers, only now done in color. And thanks for info on the Hamilton plates. Somehow, they have my name on the list for info on the Teddy bears and 1890 stuff and not for the space things, so they have now received a nice little note about not sending me info on these things. I was really pissed.

Sandi Jones: Welcome back to SW fandom.

Matthew Whitney: Like your view that Vader knew how Leia would act on the Death Star. He at least never seemed to underrate the enemy. He must have known her as a senator or, at least known of her, and how she was likely to react.

Michelle Malkin: Well, sex in SW. Surprise! It is not, and I mean *not*, easy to write without making it either mushy or "Ok, I'll take you to dinner and we will have sex." Most sex on television is about as

romantic as stale bread, a convenience for lack of other action, and writing it can be difficult to get the true feel without mush, violence or convenient boredom.

Tim Blaes: Well, perhaps to some Michael Keaton was a good Batman. We all have our own ideas and I, for one, do not think so.

Kathy Agel: Apologies for not getting a story to you for your new zine, but with the trouble on my office equipment, I was lucky to keep the Library going and get BC#3 back on schedule or almost, but will see you at Revelcon anyway.

Cheryl Pryor: Gauntlets! Okay, black breathing mask and cape. No, you are not Dorthy (Dorthy -- giggle giggle -- that is great).

Anne-Virginie Dutech: Stop worrying with the English bit. Get a bit of help and away you go. One thing about English, you can -- if you use your imagination -- break about every rule in the book and still have an understandable story. It is great to try for perfection but, if you have a well-thought out story, that is the bottom line.

Tina Bentrup: Well, I am with the majority about Sebastian Shaw, a position I seldom find myself in. The man simply did not live up to the roll.

Sorry, Cheree, but I had to try and make up for two, or is it three, issues. Force knows when I will get to LoC again. Til next time--



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November 16, 1992

Hello, people of the Southern Enclave. This is a new voice.

Allow me to introduce myself: I'm a new fan and a new author.

I'd never written to a fanzine (or for that matter read one) before 1988. After a lifetime of "serious" Science Fiction reading and disdain for "space opera", I discovered the SW trilogy in October 1985 and have never recovered. I started corresponding with penpals in 1987 and writing poetry and short stories in 1989.

And now, for the first time ever, SE comes in and I discover there's this mass of people who have known each other forever, commenting on other comments, back and forth on the subjects that have been on my mind for such a long time.

It's very encouraging, as for the longest time I had thought I was crazy. I *had* known there were others like me, my penpals for instance, but it is still different to find such a great number of people whose main interest, even passion, is SW. People who go through job changes and hardships, with illness and deaths in the family, moving, traveling ... and who are concerned, as I am, with Darth Vader and Obi-Wan Kenobi; with Luke and Leia; with the Emperor and with Han Solo... Turns out I'm not alone.

Year before last, when the SCUDS flew here, I was in the middle of two SW stories: "Shore Leave" and "One Night on Endor". And, yes, for two weeks I was petrified, especially wearing my gas mask and giving comfort through it -- on the phone -- to a pregnant woman ... but as soon as the war was over, I resumed work on the stories.

It was at that time that I came to the conclusion that, as the French poet put it: "L'Important c'est la Rose" -- What matters is the Rose. When situations are unbearable, when Things Happen that bring you down and out, when life is full of shit -- what matters, really, is beauty, and ideas, and art, and the Spirit. It's the Rose that matters.

We have our own Rose. Not just me, but a great many others out there. And I can only say: Thank the Force!

That said, and while I still know too little about

the different viewpoints of all the fans to have a discussion with any of them, I'd like to state my position -- so that if there's someone who thinks like me, she or he can get in touch. And the others can jump on me...

First that SW is, to me, a unique experience. Three motion pictures, a work of art, that is simultaneously fiction and fact; of which I know in all details how it was conceived, produced and finished on Planet Earth, yet that has its *real* reality in another Galaxy, far, far away, where it exists as both history and scripture (something like our own Bible). Where it *happened*, and where, presumably, the inhabitants have recorded it, and fictionalized it, and made it their scripture.

Then that, as far as I'm concerned, *only what we see is real* in that Galaxy far, far away: The Story, the mythical, scriptural, Story *is the three movies, and nothing else*. All the rest, everything written about and around SW, even the novelizations authorized by George Lucas and the new books written to make money, are, in the *real* reality, interpretations by scribes, done maybe centuries after the fact. The Apocrypha to the Bible, so to speak.

For the SW trilogy is a parable. A morality play -- a passion play. If, on one level, it is a glorious space opera, action-adventure in incredibly imaginative settings (and that's all it is, for many a fan!) on another level it's a religious teaching: about the Force and about Good and Evil being two sides of one coin, about Choice and about Power; Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi are not just the sort of Gurus we know on Earth, but Teachers of the Force, in the Force. And what is that, really? We don't know, we live on Earth, our own religions are different, even if we, too, deal with good and evil and the consequences of our actions. But what we mostly deal with are reward and punishment, the afterlife, and god. Not with the extrasensory and the paranormal, as the ingredients of religion. And Choice and Change and the use of Power are very seldom part of tenets we hold, or even know about. One of the most consistent characteristics of Earthly religions is relation and obedience to a god or gods, something that does not exist in the Force religion.

If only the three movies are Reality, and if we discard the earthbound explanations and interpretations of all those peripheral scribes ("Luke felt...", "Leia thought..." -- Gimme a break!), there remains nothing but trying to fathom by ourselves why they do

what they do: what Luke goes through as he discovers his father, as he grows into a Jedi; what Leia is feeling under physical or mental torture and infinite loss -- and the burden of command; what Obi-Wan Kenobi's considerations actually are, in his quest for freeing the Galaxy from the Emperor and Vader -- and what happens to Vader inside, when he meets his son, why his Return as Anakin is triggered.

We ask ourselves: Why would they say this, do that? Some things seem self-evident -- Luke's scream when Vader tells him the truth; Leia's: "somehow I've always known"; Han's "I know". But other reactions are by no means so obvious. Because they're the reactions of people vastly different from us.

We find ourselves puzzled (and I've seen some fans looking for the most bizarre explanations -- such as insanity!) by Obi-Wan's lies to a Luke he obviously loves; by Vader's obsession; by Luke giving himself up to the Ewoks; by Leia never crying -- except once; by Lando's turn-around after betrayal. But we are puzzled only if we look at those outsize Players through the eyes of our own planet's experiences, our Earth-sized psychologies and philosophies. If we could put ourselves in their place, to perceive their different wisdom and powerful emotions, we might understand.

For the people of the Saga are not like the ordinary humans we know, farmers and soldiers, pilots and teachers. Even Dictators and Nazis. Just as the Jedi are not the Templars and the Force religion is not Zen Buddhism, so the SW people are not like you and me.

The people of the Saga have greater strength of character, more intelligence, their emotions are more powerful. They're physically stronger and more resistant. They have the Force, whether they feel it or not. Those who do feel it, have a whole different pool of resources inside to draw on, even the Dark Ones. It is quite impossible to apply to them the yardsticks we use in ordinary life, the yardsticks of Earthly psychological theory, or Judeo-Christian morality.

How would it feel to be inside their skin? Be a telepath, an empath -- someone who feels the Force? Someone whose emotions are so powerful -- yet so much under control? That's what I've been trying to do, that has been my way of exploring SW: getting inside them, to feel with them and discover how they are affected by those emotions -- and by the Force, for their reactions and their lives. It has given me the impulse for writing my poetry and my fiction. I've been trying, but I'm not so sure, succeeding. For I'm

of Earth -- so all I can do is use my imagination.

But I sure would like to see this kind of thing in other fans' fiction, too!

Thanks for your attention. May the Force be with You.

Unfearing Editors

Matthew Whitney
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November 18, 1992

On the editor/fan writer relationship, I have no "horror stories" to share. By and large I got along quite well with every editor who I submitted to. Sure, a toe got stepped on here and there (of both parties), but nothing serious. Well, at least I don't trade letter bombs with anyone.

Responding to A. G. Steyn's question, "Where are the unfearing editors willing to publish such boldness?" I am reminded of the stories you hear coming out of Hollywood where a director/writer fumes that the studio/network has compromised the artist's creative freedom. I'm an anti-censorship as the next liberal, but it's the studio/network's millions that the artist is gambling. If these artists want creative freedom, no one is stopping them from bank-rolling it themselves. In our (hopefully) happy world of zines, if an author wants to publish bold fiction that eds balk at or threaten to cut or alter, then the author can still pull their submission.

I do believe no one must put up with edits they don't agree with, but neither should they feel an editor has any obligation to print anything they don't wish to (no matter what the reason). I hold editors in high regard for providing a forum that I have neither the talent nor energy to match. If not for them, none of my fiction would have had any readership beyond a few of my closest personal friends.

If a fan has something editors want to change or won't print at all, then another editor could be sought, or if all else fails, they could always print their own

zine. No one is stopping that (are they?).

Carolyn Golledge brought up a meaty topic: How much credit does Lucas deserve for the Saga? ANH was surely his baby, but even that got input from others. 3PO was supposed to be a "used car salesman" type until Anthony Daniels made him a nervous English butler. And the human characters were certainly shaped by the casting of those particular actors. But Lucas is the one who ultimately approved their being cast. If he hadn't liked what he saw, I'm sure he'd have nixed it.

TESB definitely is the furthest from GL's vision, and I believe he's said this himself in print. It was the one he was the least involved in the day-to-day filming of. Leigh Brackett? I've heard her draft of the script was a very early rough draft, with little ending up in the final version. Kasdan was really starting from a bare bones plot. That's not to say Brackett couldn't have produced an even better script had she lived to finish it. We'll never know. As for what GL's complaints with TESB are, who knows? Many fans consider it the best.

His displeasure (minor?) with aspects of the production led him to choose Marquand and to be on hand much more for ROTJ. The way I read all the articles about that film was that Marquand's job was to try and fit the film as closely to GL's design as possible, even at the sacrifice of what he may want to do himself. He was undoubtedly hired because he and Lucas saw eye-to-eye. Lucas didn't want someone bucking against him, and I'm sure Marquand wouldn't have signed aboard if he didn't feel comfortable with the relationship. It's not swallowing your pride if you agree with the guy giving you instructions.

With the above said, I can see people questioning GL if you are in the opinion that the genius of SW lies in TESB. For me, ROTJ works. It's the Saga I love, not pieces only. How much of TESB is GL's vision? My gut says the film, as shot by Kershner, came out darker than GL had planned. But as we never heard him rant 'n' rave that Kersh had ruined his film, I bet it's only a matter of a small degree. More of a surprise than upset. But, as I think GL doesn't like to let go of too much control, I guess he just wanted to insure there'd be no surprises at all in ROTJ.

What is spice? I just hope it's not a drug. Han as a dope dealer shatters my dreams of these guys as heroes. *Blake's 7* tap danced around this by making all the original crew criminals, but not very vicious

ones (and angels next to the real baddies, the Federation). Spice? Maybe it's an ingredient in air purification systems. All spacecraft would have to recycle oxygen, and maybe the spice is used in purifying air. Why illegal? Maybe they're bypassing Imperial monopolies? (The classic case of salt-making in India, as dramatized by Ghandi, comes to mind.)

What did the Jedi do when someone was falling toward the Dark Side? Could they strip that knight of his/her Force potential? How about banishing the stripped away Dark aspects of the Force to some certain place for safe keeping? That place would have to be way off the beaten path so no one could stumble upon it and tap it. It would also need a guardian. You can guess what I'm getting at ... Dagobah and the Tree! It's up to you, gang, to decide if any of this makes sense. Is there anything tangible to the Force (Light or Dark) that could be taken from a Jedi? Are there Darkside germs? Can someone be made Force-neutral?

Kathy Agel: Thanks for the McCaffrey news (of a Pern shipfish novel and a short story collection ... TERRIFIC!). On the topic of collaborations between authors, let me shamelessly plug the Katherine Kurtz/Deborah Turner Harris *Adept* series. They focus on a group of occultists in modern Scotland who are a sort of realistic "ghostbusters". (No Bill Murray characters, these aren't comedies.) Very nice stuff, and from what I gather, these are *collaborations*, not what Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee are doing.

Anne-Virginie Dutech: Great introductory Loc ... for I seem to agree with 99% of what you said. (Big difference in our opinions of Obi-Wan. What's up? Am I the only one who came out of ANH as a Kenobi fan?) Re: Palpatine and Vader overlooking Leia/the limitation of the Force being an inability to "conceive or imagine something." A good idea there! It reminds me of Tolkein and the Palantiri. Denethor saw death and ruin because that's what he expected to see and had not the ability to wrest control from Sauron. Palpatine and Vader sensed the latent Force potential in Leia but did not extrapolate from there. They sensed Luke's strength, too, and sought to make a Darksider of him, but if they imagined he'd reject their offers, then they arrogantly assumed they'd be able to kill him if he turned against them (thus contradicting their opinion of his strength). I bet Luke's attempt at suicide in TESB was viewed as a sign of weakness and may have lulled Palpatine into false security.