

THANK YOU

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Dec. 27, 1994

What a wonderful early Xmas present SE #40 was—and did I ever need it! On the day of its arrival, I was up to my icing-smearred chin in holiday baking but finding no joy in the season due to my father's absence. SE's distraction, the reminder of so many SW friends and of the happiness SW has brought into my life lifted my sagging spirits considerably.

By the way, thanks to all who supported me with cards and well wishes. It meant more than I can say.

I also cannot adequately express the relief I experienced when I read that neither SE nor *Tremor* would be immediately vanishing from my future. These two products of your considerable hard work, Cheree, have become nearly as essential to me as air and water. Selfishly, I thank you and hunger for years and years of more to come.

Congrats to Randy on his new position as well. I hope this signals only the beginning of a new and prosperous future for your family.

Now to the issue itself.

Maggie's continuing report on *Jundland Wastes* remains interesting to one who was not in fandom then. Too bad those dated articles are still able to conjure tender nerves, but perhaps it will serve to warn we relative newcomers away from past mistakes. I look forward to more.

While I thoroughly enjoyed Judy Yuenger's Eclecticon

report (as well as the letters that referred to that event), it only made me more hungry for those elusive winning lottery numbers. It sounded like such fun! Alas, MWC is all my shallow purse can currently manage—and that can prove a test all by itself. Perhaps one day I can look forward to attending however. We can but dream.

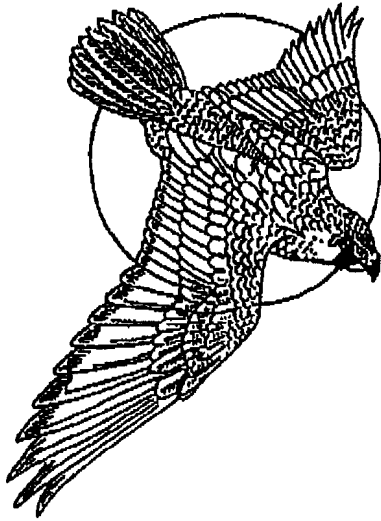
Before I proceed to the actual letters, allow me one last comment. I absolutely *loved* all the SW-based cartoons in this issue! I'd seen none of them before and my perverse nature adores the humorous side of the Force. Let roll the Energizer-Vader commercial, please. (Not to mention the Simpsons/SW promo.)

Debbie Kittle (and others): Would fans be so quick to condemn the pro SW novels if they appeared as fan fic? Okay, tough question, but in all fairness I believe most would. Perhaps the criticisms would be more diplomatically phrased, but I believe fan readers who take the time to write LoCs generally tend to point out what they feel are problems or holes in a story. They also tend to state it when they hold opposite views from the story's content. While I happen to be like Judy Yuenger, a charter member of the "Thumper Philosophy of Life Upbringing", even I have been known to express malcontent in the odd LoC or two. *Some* feelings are just too strong to stifle, no matter the target.

A. G. Steyn: How clearly your time line made my point! I love it and it reinforces my view that forty years is just too, too long. Hello, Father George, are you listening?

Belea Keeney: Welcome to SE. You're gonna like it here. By the way, I love your first name. Dr. Lillith Crane, of course. How deliciously, wickedly funny. Terrific idea.

Tim Blaes: Your recollection of your first MWC echoed my own—and I didn't have the ego-comfort of being the minority gender present. Reading zines and corresponding

1 of 2 sheets

Lair of the Blue Falcon

by
J.A. Berger



Luke Skywalker set out to rescue a friend. How was he to know that in trying to save Han's life he was probably taking him to his death.

Darth Vader had destroyed the Jedi, but there were others that had supported the Old Republic, and the Blue Falcons had been the most dangerous. Like the Jedi, The Dark Lord had destroyed the Falcons, Or had he?

Leia Organa had only compassion for a young farm boy who had lost not only his family, but the man who had led him to the Force. She knew now that compassion, had not only put the young man at risk, but had endangered the whole Rebel base

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with fellow SW fans certainly didn't prepare me for the con or the "society" I met there either. That's one reason I try to make others feel welcome now that I'm more comfortable. I also try to encourage fellow con-attendees to do likewise. I know the hours are stretched to a max already, but we were all "first-timers" once ourselves. We should try to make the con as enjoyable for others as we want it to be for ourselves. Isn't that part of what we want SW fandom to represent?

Jennifer Moore: Did I dislike Kevin Anderson's portrayal of Luke? Do you have to ask? No, I did not, though it wasn't horrible so much as mediocre, IMO. Why I dislike the book. Boy, do you want the whole list? No, I've tried to block that nightmare from my mind, so I won't go into all of my reasons anew. However, two strong points pertain to two-year-olds being "safe(r)" from Dark Side influence (Anderson must not have children!) and the naming of one of the children Anakin. No way do I ever, ever, ever see Han or Leia even contemplating such a thing. P-L-E-A-S-E!!

Mary Jo Fox: As I said to Debbie, I believe most LoC writers tend to be polite, mentioning chiefly the stories they liked and avoiding those they didn't. If that's considered being more tolerant of fan writers, so be it. At least the criticisms of the pro novels are honest and not evading the issue. Personally, I doubt I'll spend another dime on the novels, though I may break down and buy the one due out by Margaret Weis since I did love the *Dragonlance* series she co-wrote with Tracy Hickman. Hmmm, Raistlin shuns spells and turns Dark Side Jedi. Could be interesting.

To all I failed to respond directly to, hello. Perhaps next time I'll *feel* more wordy.

Before I go, however, I have one semi-question comment. While watching the A & E network's *Biography* series on Soupy Sales, I was suddenly struck by what may have long been evident to others. That is that as a small child I loved the Soupy Sales Show and I remember White Fang only as a pair of hairy paws. However, Soupy always looked up as though White Fang was huge. While touted as "the meanest dog in the world", the mental image was compelling. Now, my long-winded point is — could this early program in any way have influenced Lucas' creation of Chewbacca? Does anyone know or find fault with my question?

One last word of thanks to all who so thoughtfully conveyed their friendship and concern for me on my father's death. The flowers were lovely, Cheree. Your cards and letters helped more than you can know. Though I miss him terribly, Dad was suffering and now he's at peace. I keep remembering Yoda's line "not this crude matter" and it comforts. Besides, Dad will be with me as long as I live — in my love of reading, writing, good music and the joy of laughter that are his legacy to me.

So, thanks and let's hope '95 is a better year for us all. Is it May yet?

GROWING PAINS

Debbie Kittle
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January 24, 1995

Another great issue. I especially enjoyed Maggie's second chapter of SW Fandom's growing pains. And pains they were. She mentioned we still "live with a legacy of hesitation." Perhaps that's more of a blessing than a curse. When reading these letters, we can't see the person's facial expression and we can't hear the tone of voice so it can be easy to misconstrue a meaning especially if the reader has had a bad day. We don't need another "civil war."

I also liked Judy's Eclecticon report. It really was fun and look forward to the second one.

Congrats on Randy getting a job!

Dead Bothan Nora: Gee, did you like *Courtship*? Only teasing! I know you didn't like it at all but I did. There were parts in the book that rubbed me the wrong way, such as point 2, but I find that with fanfic as well. There never will be the perfect SW story (pro or fan) 'cause you can't please everyone.

I enjoyed *Crystal Star* as well. Nicely done, IMO.

Dead Bothan Z.P.: Don't forget that some of us doll makers live in MD :) . Anyway, liked your response to Barbara Anderson re: *The Rest Of The Garbage*.

Marti: I haven't heard much grumbling about the 3rd plate either. Agree with Cheree on the original art versus stock.

A.G.: Re: the cardboard Han... Hey, it's better than nothing. He's great to have at a silly hat party (which we had over New Year's at Liz Sharpe's house to celebrate 1995 and a few December birthdays. Han lived up to his part of the bargain and became quite silly in his hats. Right now he's wearing my silly hat from the party and a minister's collar [I don't know what they're called]. Father Han??). Believe me, he can be almost as much fun in bed (it happened at MW this past year) as the real thing, not that I'll ever get the real thing.

Next time you're in the States east of the Mississippi, come on over and visit. We Dead Bothans know how to show people a fun time.

Interesting timeline.

Belea: Welcome to SE!!

Pat: Just send all your snow to me. The weather over the holidays was lousy. Temps were in the 50 to 60 degree

range. I felt like I was in Florida! (Apologies to Belea). Finally temps cooled down quite a bit but then warmed up in mid January to 70!!!! Someone wants me to be miserable during winter as I am in summer. However, it is finally cooling down to around 30 and we survived our very weak sleet/freezing rain episode. No more of the freezing ice stuff. I want snow! Please!!

Louise: I loved *Bad Feeling*! I highly recommend it to everyone. Very well done.

Hey, remember a few of us (Judy, Jennifer and Barbara) will be vacationing on Hoth in the winter and tauntaun riding is a must. Warm clothing? We don't need those! That was one of my favorite cards.

How about those wide screen cards? They've been delayed another 2 weeks so we will hopefully see them the first of February but the promo cards look fantastic. On one of the promos, I saw part of a scene from SW that I had totally missed!

Yes, Wedge's girlfriend, Qwi, is slightly blue but blue and orange are the colors of my favorite football team — the Miami Dolphins so I have no problem except that they lost in the Playoffs!

The wolves had to be sent back because the government changed its mind (again!) and felt that ducks and birds will bring people to the new visitor center. Excuse me, but I can see *them* in my own backyard. I was willing to travel once a month or so to see these cubs grow up. Oh well, I'll never forget my experiences with them. It was once in a lifetime.

Honorary Dead Bothan Carolyn: Story idea re: ex-Imps and the new gov't? I'll put that on the way back burner. I know how you feel — I'd like about 40 hours in a day and a clone to go to work for me so I could stay home and do all my zine reading/doll making.

Ming: I think the costuming award is a nice idea and certainly might encourage people especially if they don't write.

Tim: In your response to Barbara about overuse of the Force, you mentioned "the act of seeing into the future could change the future you are seeing into, until you see only what you want to see...". Could that have happened to Palpatine because he said everything was progressing as he had foreseen. But just how much had he seen or believed he had seen and drawn his own conclusions?

Amanda: Good to finally meet (albeit briefly) in NJ. Hopefully we'll have more time to spend at E-con 2.

Your comments were right on the credit about canon/POV.

Dead Bothan Jennifer: Good phrasing on the question and may you fry in your own heat wave this summer. In other words, keep it on your side of the Potomac!

Dead Bothan Mary Jo: It really is interesting to see how all the workers at Another Universe and my comic books

stores know us by sight and that I know the entire layout of the dozen or more TRUs. I look forward to 1995 and all the new SW stuff we'll be buried under.

Liked the way you put your thoughts about the pro books controversy.

Judy: I'm waiting for that snow with a huge baseball glove. Send it my way!

I know, I feel very lucky to have found so many SW fans in this area. My life is richer (and busier) because of it.

Your comments re: the books were well put, too.

I really do care what everyone thinks about the novels. I respect everyone's opinions/feelings and their rights to those opinions/feelings. Writers (new/old) will use elements from the novels (Hi, Nora!) to tell a story. Early writers did it with the Daley books. I'm thrilled that these novels might get some new writers involved in fandom and it also keeps the Saga in the forefront.

Dead Bothan Cheryl: (Hi, Lin!) Hope to see you next ish!

J.P.: I know you're reading this. Per our phone conversation, get your hands dirty and send in a letter. I know the perfect way to get you involved: I'll tell everyone that you got to go to Lucasfilm and took "the tour".

A few last notes: Hard to believe it's 1995 already. Time sure has flown by and MW is just right around the corner. I really wish it was still November so we can be sure the doll exhibit is finished on time. Please, please one and all, find a few minutes out of your very hectic MW schedule (I know it is really hard) to visit the doll exhibit. It will probably be set up late morning Saturday and taken down directly after the Star Awards Sunday. It will be in the FOE cantina. We would like to keep this up as an annual tradition not only because we enjoy doing this but hope others enjoy seeing it as well. Each and every costume is hand sewn, sculpted or glued together as well as extensively researched to get as close to perfect as we can. None of the outfits were premade (except on the GI Joes and Barbies which are used as local color. Not enough days in a decade to do those). We will have 4 scenes set up. One directly from the movie and 3 are interpretive scenes from in between or after ROTJ.

Some of the planning has gone on more than a year as we are already planning for 1996. I hope that all of you MW attendees stop by and visit. We welcome comments of any kind. Thanks!

I just got (finally after more than a year) the SW chess board and it is gorgeous. I will be bringing it to MW if anyone wants to check it out.

Anyone catch *ST: Voyager*? Really nicely done!

New plates are coming out this year. The first is the *Millennium Falcon* as painted by Sonia Hilios. The plate is beautiful from the brochure I got. She is an excellent ST

artist and look forward to getting this plate.

The last thing I want to mention is the ballot for the Star Awards should be out with this SE mailing. Please vote! The 40 something voters we had last year was an appalling number. I know it will be hard as there will be a lot of stories to vote on but take a few minutes to vote. Thanks!

Take care all and Fly Casually In The Force!

P.S. The very minor dusting of white flakes that I got on 1/22 does NOT count!

A NEW HOPE

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January 23, 1994

Hohohohoho ... BAH, HUMBUG!!! This lady was only too happy to consign 1994 into wide open orifice of Carkoon! Hope everybody *else's* holidays were all wished for and more!

Just out of curiosity, was New Year's really instituted to give a psychological ray of hope? Has nothing to do with equinox, dying/rising, God and other sundry beliefs. OK — I'm subscribing to New Year's fresh-start premise. Sounds good. Hey, what an original idea — let's call 1995 "A New Hope" — shucks, it's been used already.

Winter's been far milder with Toby the Taun-Taun wondering why I bothered constructing him in the first place! Think I'll ship him to the recently beleaguered state of MO. Oh, Marti ... ya have any room by the shiny, new fence to stable Tobsters?

Maggie Nowakowska: Thanks for the continuing "Golden Age" recollections and excerpts. Fandom would be hard-pressed to find a more capable chronicler. It also provides valuable insight into the current occasional tribal flares, perhaps forcing some to reevaluate their own pristine, righteous motives (*moi* included — taint none without sin, but equilibrium of a sort is desirable for *some* cohesiveness — another opinion expressed; hah!).

Judith: What a pleasure meeting you at Eclecticon — apologies for being a less-than-brilliant conversationalist; we were all pretty zoned out by weekend's end.

Mary Jo: Despite erroneous directions and other obstructions, we managed to finally touch base! Yay, you were nearly as out of it as I! Hey, legal eagle ... batten down them hatches and go full hyper-velocity to knock out them bar exams. Aw, I'm waiting *Snowfire's* release with baited breath. "Ice-Princess", my defensive end. THANK-YOU for the girls' present — the ANH read-along has been

enjoyed 100% already! Also, it gave the appearance of toys being under our Charlie Brown tree. You are an ANGEL!

Brian: I will make a particular student transpose "Lapti Nek" as soon as he's capable — I broke down and jotted an easy version of "Power-yeecchh-Rangers". Yeah, there's actually *some* muzak in there. The things maestras must do to motivate pupils. Inspires my creativatin' more (great word, Bri — Oxford's been petitioned to add it)! Smooth move still? Naw, not the *prunes* — who said that? Interesting observation re: Zahn trilogy (not U, Sue! Your surname's on the rolls in Bantam's files; why not slip 'em one of your stories ... or a Mickey Finn, even?). Hambly's forthcoming novel should prove the best of the bunch — she's well grounded in both fantasy and sci-fi adaptation. Quite versed in the struggles in Dark and Light, and the philosophical intricacies inherent. The author is also a black-belt Karate competitor. If I hear of *one* more box o' mac&cheez, you're gonna get an East Coast care pkg! Ah, another who worships the java bean. C'mon; one talon at a time off the gypsum tiles. See ya at MWC, *I hope*!

Z. P.: You've inspired me more than you can ever know. TA.

Barbara Anderson: Tip o' the fedora; sorry we missed the trek to the house o' drool! Loved your hat. Team Ford, huh? Visiting the *Sabrina* set? 100% concurrence — Jedi aren't invincible. That's what keeps scenarios interesting, and "Mrs. Skywalker" (hahahaha) sporting her lightsaber. "Walk softly and carry a — lightsaber," as Teddy R. always said!

Nora: Taken out of context, Yoda's expressions, ear movements and all could be construed in that fashion. Yet, why did he grouse so at Luke's "recklessness" at the hasty departure? How's the equine side of the Force these days? Gimme a hint, please? What are you wearing to MWC, aside from clothes? *I still can't sew* either, but have managed my older daughter's trouser holes.

Louise: Wedge, Wedge, Wedge ... suffering from a terminal case of a colossal space Wedgie, m'dear. WELL?!? He's hangin' out the ol' *Tantive* airlock by a line waiting for you to complete part deux of TOF! Don't blame it on Gerald, either! I've a *good* feeling re: your *Bad Feeling* ... as soon as I can afford it! Mortgage and utilities first, you understand. Oh, talk to Veronica re: Vader/Anakin as Romantic 90's metal head. Now, who is it that has a Vader shrine in their boudoir? I forgot ... there is hope for Rieekan in your universe; wasn't he encased in ice, awaiting resurrection like an archeologist (ahem) excavating wooly mammoths? Unlike us, they possess Bacta technology! In one of my parodies, Leia is ready to assassinate all those plastering her scantily-clad form on cards etc. ... neutrality between opposing military scrubs is recorded history — with all the spaceports garrisoned,

there must be a few watering, or whatever holes where both drink, trading sorrows, agreeing (a) they disagree, (b) both have lost loved ones, (c) they can't wait to get back to the mayhem on the morrow, (d) they hate the war, and perhaps even ... (e) it helps defray tuition costs, and seemed the logical thing to do at the time.

Gerald: You really should launch a one-shot Threepio zine. You can even find an illustrator for it, if you search hard enough!

Pat Grant, and others interested in mulling: Whatever prevented both Yoda and Kenobi being terminated in the Purge — could it also have prevented a few others from suffering the same fate? An old speculation to be sure, but perhaps reexamination might yield new answers?

Ming: Glad to hear the goblet — there's a parody in this somewhere — survived its trans-coastal journey. My vacuum does occasionally behave with a sentient attitude at times. Yours? How many bytes=capability of independent thought? What is the actual *speed* of thought? If inorganic synapses mimic organic, if engrams/personality can be impressed/inputted ... yep, an H of a time ... "One boy's feeling against the survival of a universe" — no, not a happy thought, but how many tides have been turned *favorably* based on such a seemingly precarious judgment call by a pivot? Is it the mark of a potential Jedi who can discern, perhaps untangle Time's myriad threaded knot? I also can find no basis for the supposition that Han was sexually molested, schizo ... he's a *survivor*! And, possessing a great deal of good luck to bolster the demonstrated savvy! To me, Leia would rather fling an oppressive Empire down a shaft, as would vice-versa! Very accurate with a blaster, flew the *Falcon* ... nice to chat briefly at Eclecticon.

Marti: Warmest of thoughts directed your way, dear. That philosophical crack is actually a chasm, and not necessarily ominous! Hooray!!! Oh, I didn't say Luke *required* a traditional family of his own to achieve emotional involvement — his relationship with Han, and I'm sure with his students prove that! All I was trying to point out that it *might* be something he'd wish for. Something to *enhance*, balance, though *yes*, one can find their joy in any path, or most anyway, if one seeks hard enough. I still feel it's a viable direction for him, though I agree that it *would* take someone unique and fascinating to pique that type of interest. In my own SW fiction, Luke is quite attached to one of his proteges in particular, though all are regarded as family. Your interpretation of Yoda's reaction to Luke's statement of confidence to Kenobi before departing for Bespin is plausible, and jibes with my own.

Debbie Kittle: A crossed lightsaber salute to ya! The last free ten\$ I'd see in a long time was well invested — thanks!

Tammy Olsen: Saved the best for last, SkySis! Biggest gratitude for the girls' Bend-Ems, and even a toy for me — that "ActionMaster Luke" inspired *SkySongs* #12-15 — it's *your* fault I'm inexorably drawn to the malfunctioning keyboards when Marianne's frontspiece illo is awaiting final touches! (oh, I jes' luuuuv smudging that Ice-Blue-Eyed Magnificent One's chest — yahoo, coocoo for Cocoa-Puffs!!!) There's actually an ephemeral prayer I'll be going to MWC — solo, even, though if finances don't improve, I'll have to forgo. Another Tag Sale time! *Down with Palpi's Protege's oppressive attitude* re: my wee-hours *creativity*! *Only* he's waking up and noticing it!!! Grrr ... freedom is a battle fought on many fronts!

Catherine Churko: Keep on with your dreams, lady. We're rooting 4U!

Arwen, and all you other peoples at Eclecticon: Nice to touch base with y'all! See you next year! Two tankfuls of gas I'll be able to afford by the end of Oct. for my "thing"! I hear it'll be occurring before FOE's annual bash this time. Let's do a Villain Panel. (Last time, death of grandmother prevented my wish to do the others — '94 was one H of a year all across the board!) Loved *Imperium 4* — way to go, Edimatrix, and contribs!

Best to everybody, and may the Light Side of the Force be with All!

Cheree: As always, *thank you* continuing SE (and *Tremor*) — you provide an invaluable network for "snail-mailers", and fandom in general. A special plaque should be hanging on *your* wall for your *long* contribution! 21-ion-cannon salute!!!

Yvette: C'mon back out and play. You know how highly I regard Leia's heroism, and continual self-sacrifice. Bet she'd set up a place for displaced Alderaans, like a Consul/Embassy until something more permanent can be arranged.

GET A LIFE!

Mary Jo Fox
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Howdy fellow SW fans and Dead Bothans! I apologize for my semi-conscious, semi-grumpy state at Eclecticon, as I had scant to eat that day and very little sleep the night before. Regardless, I was thrilled to meet many of you in person. I'll never forget how Amanda and Kymm kept missing me, and vice versa, until right before we left! Next year, gals, Force willing...

I'm eagerly awaiting the Widevision cards — they should've been out for a while by the time you read this. *Dark Lords of the Sith* is coming along great — what an

incredible comic! Even if it had no connection at all with SW, it's still excellent sci-fi/adventure. And *Dark Empire II* ... yeah!!! Same killer art on the cover and inside, more of Veitch's wonderful, epic script. I just hope they don't blow the Boba Fett unmasking. Maybe it's Harlan Ellison inside that suit! Ha ha!

More news on Bantam publishing: rumor has it that Margaret Weis was so mortally offended by the Energizer bunny ad, she cancelled her plans to write a SW novel. (Geez, Mags, have a sense of humor, will you!). I guess this leaves it wide open for a variety of folks to do a novel in her place, including those who have already had a shot at it. I read somewhere that Tom Veitch has been interested in doing a novel, and Kathy Tyers would like to do another one. We'll see. Also, Kevin J. Anderson is writing *The Star Wars Chronology*, which will be out in late 1996 or so. Allegedly, it will be the definitive book on continuity, but not necessarily canon.

Judy: Your soapbox was right on the money. I'll just add that I've read many stories in zines that deal with the Corporate Sector Authority, Han's stint in the Academy, his subsequent court martial, and the Wookiee life debt/blood oath. All of that stuff came not from the films, but from Brian Daley's Han Solo novels! Today, almost everyone seems to accept them as canon, and takes them for granted. If people want to incorporate stuff from the recent novels or from West End Games, so what? It's not any less valid than anything I or anyone else could make up, and besides, it's the new novels, comics, and so on that are helping to bring new writers into fandom. That's not a bad thing, is it?

Maggie: I keep reading your *Jundland Wastes* history with interest. In some ways, nothing has changed. But that whole Church of Ford thing ... talk about idiocy on an epic scale! It's hard to believe this was perpetrated by alleged adults. Judging by some of the comments quoted, there were plenty of folks in need of serious psychological help. I sincerely hope that these fanatics do not get back into this scene. I know, it sounds terrible, but I think that we could all do without such viciousness and venom spewing forth from those in dire need of a life.

Louise: James Addams' story "Antilles" is headed for *Imperium* #5, as of writing. You never know, he may do a sequel or another story in time for your zine. As for myself, I'm still trying to come up with a great idea. Be patient!

Gerald: First of all, I must continue to compliment you on your artwork. Your illos in *Tremor* #8 just blew me away. Your cartoons and caricatures are great, too! I happen to like reading and writing action-oriented stories, in addition to character-oriented stories. Admittedly, combining those two elements is extremely difficult. Ever since I started writing SW stuff three years ago, my respect

for George Lucas has grown, for that very reason. But, yeah, give me a good speeder bike chase or space dogfight any day. In fact, if I had a choice between renting a Van Damme flick over some cutesy tearjerker, I'd save the Kleenex and go with the karate kicks!

Tim: Yeah, Neil Gaiman would do a great SW novel! Like Lucas, Gaiman has an excellent grasp of world mythology. If the late, great Joseph Campbell was still with us, he'd be a *Sandman* fan too. I agree with your other choices as well. Another author I'd like to see do a novel is Terry Brooks — if he could handle the technology. But his Shannara series is so much like SW, down to the lost heirs, the mystical order that had to be restored, the Han Solo-like sidekicks, and the clash between good and evil. In fact, the Shannara saga is SW, only set in a fantasy universe.

Amanda: Thanks for sharing your experiences in Trek fandom. I see eerie parallels myself, but the Bjo Trimble quote was cool. Absolutely true.

Nora: Allow this Bothanette to explain things from a Post '91-er perspective. Though I didn't read zines until 1992, SW never really went away for me either. But for those of us not in zinedom, there was no way to keep in touch with other SW fans. There was no Internet, no America Online, no comic book lettercols. So, I, like a lot of other people, went around believing I was the only person who gave a Bantha's behind about SW. There was nothing to draw me or other fans together! SW fandom was so underground in the late '80s, not even folks in other fandoms knew about it, and I knew quite a few active Trek fans. When the RPG came out in 1987, I believed I was the only person in America who bought it. I devoured each sourcebook as it came out, as it was one of my few connections to the SW universe, one of the few things, that in my mind, kept it alive. The day that *Heir to the Empire* came out was one of the happiest days, for me, in so many years. And when I got that book, I was also sure that I was the only person in America who bought it. But things started to happen when that book became a hit ... *Dark Empire* came out months later, to be followed by more "official" SW stuff. I hadn't seen anything like it since I was 14, and neither had a lot of other folks I had come to meet later on when CSW #6 published my letter 2 years ago. For a lot of them, the comics and novels, if not the RPG, *did* bring the "old days" back. Some of these guys subsequently started reading zines and writing their own stories — this includes a good number of contributors to *Snowfire*, people I have referred to other zines, and in our own presence, Brian and Amanda. They may refer to events, people, places, etc. from the pro material, but everyone puts his or her own spin on things. We may like the new material, but we are also creative beings with our own views and perspectives. We are not stupid, brainless

little robots.

Well, with that off my chest, I'll end things on a cheery note. I bet many of you caught the sci-fi retrospective show that aired on Fox back in December. My fave moment was when that robot from *Lost in Space* was doing his "Danger! Danger!" routine, only to be shut off the same way Threepio was shut off in TESB, by Carrie Fisher. Classic!

KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED!

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January 24, 1995

G'day all! And Happy New Year! And it certainly has been that for me! Which makes a nice change after the grief with which I concluded 1994. I had to say a very sad farewell to my beloved cocker spaniel/wookiee friend of over 14 years, Bonnie. I had her put out of her pain on December 7th.

My good luck began shortly after my sister insisted on going out and making sure I got another cocker puppy. My new wookiee mate's name is Honey, and she is wonderful! Around that time I was amazed and thrilled to have received further letters from Kathy Tyers (*Truce at Bakura*) and she offered to give me an introduction to her editor at West End Games' *Star Wars Adventure Journal*! Early this month I received a letter from that editor, enclosing copyright papers etc., and inviting me to please submit a story! To say I was elated is an understatement! I immediately had to call someone and celebrate and our esteemed editor, Cheree, was chosen to have her ear chewed off!

At any rate, I am posting out my story proposal (working title: *Firepower*) to West End Games today, so please everyone, keep your fingers crossed ... hard!

On top of all that excitement I also had a letter from an American literary agency expressing interest in representing my SF/F novel! Hey, who knows, I may even get this thing published yet!

So, I've been busy! But had to take time out to devour every word of the last issue of *Southern Enclave*, and also of *A Tremor in the Force* 8 which arrived at the same time! What a feast! There is a very definite renewal of top quality SW fiction and great to see many new writers and zines! Way to go, guys! Don't forget to get in your Fan Q and Star Award nominations! I predict a close run between Wanda's "Mirrors" and Nora's *Pursuit of the Nashtah*!

Okay, now to the responses I have scribbled in the margins of SE 40! (Hey, Cheree, you and SE hit the big one around the same time! Heh, heh.) ((*Ed: Actually, I hit the big one two years ago. March 1st marked my 42nd birthday!*)) First many thanks to Maggie Nowakowska for another installment in SW fan history. That was the first thing I read, and it's as engrossing as any thriller! The "Han/Luke uproar" and the subsequent total misrepresentation of the intent of several fan authors with regard to these characters (notably Maggie's excellent *ThousandWorld* series) answers my question of the previous SE re why story reviews/analysis have dropped off in letterzines in recent years, i.e. *fear*! That's a shame.

Maggie's article also gave interesting insight into fan apprehension after the trailer of ROJ was released. I wasn't involved in fandom at that time, so I always wondered what the fantalk had been! "Fear that an over-reliance on puppetry will affect the believability of the Saga" — how unfortunately prescient! I very much liked the one fan's point that "no one gets Leia, rather she chooses which man she wants." Exactly! Also the point that "all (fanzine story) reviews have POV, and ... readers will have to judge accordingly."

Many thanks also to Judy Yuenger for her fun report on Electicon. Wish I could have been there! Or at least that my phone call had connected!

On the personal front I was so very happy to read Cheree's good news re Randy's new job! Way to go! December 7th, huh? I swear there were some very strange, but good vibes around the results of that day. Anyway, it looks as though 1995 may just turn out to be a great year for us all! Here's hoping! Touch wood!

It kind of makes me blush to ask this (yes, a "Corellian" who blushes!), but I'd *love* to get back to MediaWest Con to celebrate all this good news with you all in May, but my credit card has died of terminal overload. Fortunately, Liz, Judy, and Nora have come to the rescue with a nomination of me for FanFund (I kiss your toes in humble obeisance!). So could you all (grovel) kind of, uh, like maybe, remember to vote for me? Pretty please and I promise to remember you all in my will!

Another item I will need to scrape up money for is a computer! West End Games insist that stories must be submitted on IBM compatible discs as well as hard copy! AUGH! Can anyone recommend what would be the cheapest machine I could purchase to make them happy? And any banks that are easy targets for robbery!?! :)

Boy, this LoC is getting oversized rapidly! So some quick responses:

Nora: Re *Courtship of Princess Leia*. I found I could enjoy the book (except the first two chapters which are too far off character) by thinking of it as I would a sort of alternate universe SW fan story. I've always loved fantasy

settings and thought Wolverton did a good job with his description of Dathomir, and also with the building tension of the action towards the end. *If* the witches were like Grimm's, I have no problem with that. As regards your argument, point-by-point: I don't have any problem with items raised in 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9 but agree 100% with the remainder, especially 10! Also agree with your comments about the merits of fanfic v. pro, but a fan by definition is a fanatic *i.e.*, someone who will want to read any and all SW material. Non fandom fans who are currently devouring the pro novels will surely begin to look elsewhere for more and may thus discover fanzines. Then they can decide which they prefer, and we'll be selling more zines! The bottom line is good or bad, the new material is refocusing attention where we want it!

I can only partly agree with the LOCer who said had she not discovered fanzines she'd have thought the pro books wonderful. I began writing my own SW fiction in 1984 because, aside from a notable few, most stories were not exactly my preference, *i.e.*, focused on Han/Leia and/or adventures with all 4 major characters. If I'd read only the pro books, aside from *Truce*, I'd have had even more an urgent need to write my own! If they were all like *Truce* I'd certainly have been happy enough, except that I want many many more than pro publishing could produce. So as I said, it seems to me fanzines are going to be collecting a lot of new readers because of the pro books.

My feelings on the subject can be summed up by Debbie Kittle's comment, "no one has written the perfect SW Story because... we all have differing opinions." I also agree with Judy Yuenger's feelings about being somewhat intimidated by the fiercely passionate anti pro books reactions in some quarters. I too sort of felt I'd be labelled a moron if I said I enjoyed *Courtship*, etc.

A. G. Steyn: I too wanted Tyer's Dev character to survive ... and so did she! But she was voted down by her editor apparently on the grounds that there were too many would-be Jedis popping up in the other pro books. I disagree. I think of them all, Dev would have been the best! Oh, A.G., thanks for the plug re Ford's accidents on the *Gunsmoke* set! Yep, that sounds like one of mine all right!

Marti: Agree with you re no movies rating systems for zines.

Belea T. Keeney: Welcome! And great comments! Your point re Lucas not "giving" us SW really got me thinking, and yes, you're absolutely right! Puts the whole fanzine debate in a new light for me!

Pat Grant: Agree with your comments re explicit sex and about slash stories for the most part being out of character. Applauded your point about Kevin Anderson's weak Republic needing the Jedi to save them. "Isn't that where it all began"! Indeed! Re the MWC accom-

modation problems ... hey, I say they should erect a tent city in the car park! Kidding, of course, but yes, more rooms please! Agree also re strong female characters in *Cagney and Lacey*. Great show. Me and you re opinion on Ewoks ... blech! Disagree re your feelings over Leia's sarcasm in ANH. I feel her "mouth" is her way of coping with fear and terror, and probable near collapse, and that Solo recognizes and responds to this, knowing it's his way of handling things too. You and I could have a long discussion re that and also re your view of "there is no try". Sometimes it seems harsh, then sometimes I think Yoda meant it specifically for Luke and that moment, *i.e.*, that his power was dependent on his strength of will. Many thanks for your words of appreciation re the Local Color characters in the Cantina. I had so much fun! Hope to write to you soon and give that LoC you wanted for FOE. And I just *love* your ideas for our own SW Masquerade at the dance! Oh, I've *gotta* get back to MediaWest this year even if just for that! Finally, I'm glad you're hooked on SE LoCing!

Louise Turner: Hiya! Excellent summary re Imps/Rebels in neutral setting. The SW fanzine situation in Australia sounds the same as for Britain is predominantly a male domain. Interesting. Oh how I laughed over your calling Threepio "Creepio"! Love it! Hey, you didn't tell me about your Welsh descent!

Ming and the "Star Awards Consortium". A big *Yes*, *Please* to your SW costume awards! Love your lion and the lamb analogy and Solo's advice re same!

Mary Jo Fox: I gave your pro v. zine story debate comments the most applause marks! Well, yours and Judy's! If anyone wants my opinion I can just direct them to these comments! Well said! Especially that last sentence advising us all not to forget "the humor, the joy, the triumph, even the silliness that are all part of SW too."

Enough, I gotta get out of here before Cheree shoots me for giving her RSI! ((Ed: *That's Repetitive Stress Injury, also known as carpal tunnel syndrome, for those who don't know — and I've already got it, Carolyn!*)) And we all gotta look after our Cheree, the heart of SW fandom!



OUR 'LITTLE HOBBY

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January 27, 1995

Greeting Fellow Enclavers!!

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope everyone had a pleasant holiday season. Isn't it a joy that we have SE to share our ideas about our "little hobby"? Don't you like to open the mailbox and see that thick yellow envelope from Cheree? Sure beats those dammed little glassine envelopes with the PO Box return addresses that you just know are not warm wishes from your creditors.

I do have a favor to ask of any trusting SE'er. Does anyone have a copy of issue #36 that they would be willing to loan me? I have #35 and #37, but Cheree has sold out of 36 and I would really like to read the letters and discussion. Please drop me a postcard and I'll be more than happy to forward an SASE for the loaner. Thanks in advance.

Was anyone else as underwhelmed as I was with the third installment of the *Jedi Academy* trilogy? Honestly, I've tried, really tried to read *Champions of the Force* no less than three times and I just could not do it! It was work getting through the first two. I just don't think that reading a SW book should be work. The characters are uninvolving and Luke is on such a downer.

In fact, except for *Truce at Bakura*, I haven't liked any of the pro fiction that's been released. The new Vonda McIntyre is in the bookstores now, but I'm not going to spend \$25 to read it in hardcover. I may pick it up next year in paperback. I realized that it is partly my own fault; my interest in SW is more focused now on the prequel to ANH. The Clone Wars, the start of the Empire, the fall of the Republic, Obi-Wan and Anakin are what I want to read and see films about. Now here is a question for my fellow fans — have I just gotten spoiled by the high quality of some fanfiction that the official stories can now only seem boring? Am I destined to be sorely disappointed with the next three movies because of this? Is this a normal hazard of fanfic readers? Help!!

To answer in general some previous comments about the lack of new plots and ideas — remember for some of us, this is all new. Since I've only been actively collecting zines for the past six months or so, most of the stories I've read are fresh and exciting. In fact, I had a story of my own sketchily plotted out involving a woman sold in an Imperial-arranged marriage to protect her father and lo and behold!! I open up *Tremor in the Force* #8 and Veronica

Wilson has already written a very interesting story along those same lines. For those of you who have been involved for fifteen years or so, of course it's bound to get repetitive. And I think frankly, until George comes out with the new trilogy, there may not be a whole lot of new directions to go in. The new stories that arise from Kenobi, Anakin, the young Palpatine and Luke and Leia's mother will doubtless provide lots of ideas to bounce off on.

Perhaps we could think of it as sort of a big pinball machine — and maybe episodes 4, 5, and 6 have pretty much had about as much ball bouncing as it can take without breaking the glass top (i.e., slash, cross universe, graphic violence, etc.).

Saw the Energizer rabbit vs. Vader commercial — hated it. End of comment.

My Xmas present to myself this year was the boxed Trilogy Laserdisc collection!! OOOOHHHH!! It's been a blast to have. The entire set is CAV (techno talk for constant angular velocity.) I have no idea what it really means except I can go frame by frame to watch certain scenes — most enlightening! If any of you have any questions about certain scenes, feel free to ask me to watch and I will report back to you. I did watch the lightsaber duel in TESB again and Luke's strike on Vader was on the neck, not on the arm or elsewhere.

The laserdisc set is amazing! Each movie has a half hour side of supplemental materials with things like the original movie trailers and interviews with the principal creators (Lucas, Dennis Muren, Ken Ralston, etc.), behind the scenes tours of the special effects labs and some still photos of archive material. There is also an analog soundtrack with a voiceover narration about sfx in particular scenes. And of course the whole soundtrack is just wonderful. With a non hifi VHS machine all these years, I'd forgotten some of the neat noises that came across in the theater.

The trailers for TESB were the most interesting I thought. There is a scene where 3PO rips something off a wall and also a very romantic looking almost/pre kiss with Leia and Luke (in the med center). It's definitely not the flippant kiss we saw in TESB, it was sweet and yearning. The very first trailer released was composed entirely of zooms into still photos and storyboards with no live action at all.

Attention, Veronica, Cheryl and Tina and other followers of His Sithlord's Dark Worshipfulness: In the Emperor's death scene, the implanted skeletal/skull special effects in Vader are very weird! Each skull is different, some are almost feline or lupine in appearance, and Vader's entire right arm is mechanical. Also, there seems to be mechanical additions/spinal discs on his neck near the skull. It's fairly creepy to see it that way.

So, some specific comments:

Veronica Wilson: "I'm not worthy!" (insert smiley face here!). Your stories in *Tremor*, *Shadow Jedi* and *Imperium* were mightily enjoyed and re-read here in my household. Your characterization of our favorite Sith Lord is right on target — not too harsh, not too wimpy. Please, please, please keep writing your stories for us Vader fans!

Also I can sympathize with your hard work and effort towards getting your Ph.D. My Masters degree took me just over two years full time and boy, writing it was sometimes a bitch and a half. What worked well for me was constructing a timeline with my graduation date at the top and working backwards to set internal deadlines for my lit review, data collection, analysis and results.

During the last year, I also kept my committee posted monthly with the schedule for thesis work. I pencilled in submission dates for copy with my expectations for their turnaround time included. This way I had the extra incentive of keeping to a timeline that other people knew about and that was a little pressure in itself. It must have worked — I am a college graduate!!

Z. P. Florian: You're not short dear, you're vertically challenged!! Don't let the vertically advantaged make you feel as though you don't measure up. Remember, you're a giant among us SW fans; a prolific writer and talented illustrator to boot. I really enjoyed your work on Veronica's story in TF#8!! Very well done! Glad to hear that you'll be producing *The Rest of the Garbage* for us smutfans.

Louise Turner: Which exact scene did you think you saw females in the Imperial honor guard? Let me know and I'll be glad to look at it on disc and tell you what I see.

Maggie Nowakowska: Your historical analysis on the *Jundland Wastes* has been fascinating for this neofan. I'm looking forward to the next installment. It's been a valuable history lesson for me and even makes me curious to read some of the letters and discussion that prompted such rabid responses. I think Ming has some of the back issues; I'll order some from her to check it out for myself.

That's it for now. If business permits, I'm going to make a sincere effort to get up to Lansing for the MWC in May and I hope to meet some of you in the flesh. It just depends on how busy Memorial Day will be for me and if I feel comfortable leaving things in the hands of my assistant manager. If anyone has any tips or suggestions for first-time attendees I'd love to hear them!



CORELLIAN CUISINE

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Happy Year of the Pig! Hopefully it will be a better year for this Metal Rat than the last, which was a real Dog of a year.

Nora Mayers: By some criteria the pro books are more "real" than fan fiction. They are blessed by the creators/owners, however casually. In the remote chance that Lucas ever does produce the last trilogy, I'm willing to bet he'll feel little obligation to adhere to anything set down in the current line of books. How "real" will they be then?

You mentioned A.C. Crispin has a SW novel in the works. I can't say I'm all that enthusiastic. *Writer's Digest* once suggested that fanzines were a good place for beginning writers to learn their craft, and cited Crispin as someone who got their start in zines. Crispin fired back, that anything of hers published in a fanzine was not originally written for that purpose, and that writing for fanzines would probably stunt your growth as a writer. Pardon me if I hold a grudge.

Z. P. Florian: Why would the Ewoks befriend Leia then try to eat Han? Well, she's pretty scrawny, don't you think? Not much meat on her. And perhaps the Ewoks have read that classic tome of Corellian cuisine, "To Serve Han".

Marti Schuller: What man would endure the discomfort of carrying a child to term? I would, if it was for the right woman. This is not to say I would have no concerns. As far as I know it's only theoretically possible, and I would want to know what effect my metabolism would have on the child's development, not to mention the child's effect on my metabolism. But if she couldn't do it, why shouldn't I volunteer?

Debbie Kittle: A pro writer might do well to get feedback from media fans. But our reasons for writing, and our goals in reading fan fiction are not always the same as a pro writer/publisher. The problem some fans have, as I see it, isn't that they have two sets of standards for pro & fan fiction. The problem is that they don't have two sets of standards.

You're probably right that Leia wouldn't have time to do a zine, or watch "TV" or see "movies", even if Alderaan had such things. But if she uses her life and the people in her life as a basis for works of fiction, then she might get into the same sort of trouble Tom Wolfe did. "Look Homeward, Ewok" might lose Leia a few friends. Perhaps she might write bedtime stories for her children?

A. G. Steyn: A "laser bidet" could too easily be rigged for assassination; I'll stick with two-ply.

Mark Hamill licked chocolate off who's bare bosom?

Belea Keeney: Paramount set a precedent of sorts by ignoring Trek-zines, gen and adult. But legally that doesn't extend to Lucasfilm. To be fair, copyright/trademark law can be dicey for both fans and copyright holders.

I feel the ideal situation for both the studios and the fans would be to *publicly* not acknowledge each other, but discreetly pay very close attention to the other. A studio should not feel *obligated* to any sort of fan pressure, but they would be stupid to *ignore* fans who support them. I don't care much for studio interference in fannish affairs, even unintentional interference. Not long after *The Wrath of Khan*, a prominent ST letterzine became aware that Harve Bennett was a subscriber. The change in everyone's behavior was not pretty.

I suppose it boils down to respect and understanding, on our part as much as theirs. It's a shame most studios don't want to understand us, let alone respect us.

Brian Harris: Books and films each have their own method of pacing and story development. I've read plenty of fiction, pro and fannish, that was dense and very difficult to read, yet left me with the impression that it might make a wonderful movie. I can't help but wonder, if Zahn's books were to be made into movies would they make a better impression?

I also wonder what Zahn's loudest detractors would be willing to say to his face.

Louise Turner: I suppose the artists on the first set of *SW Galaxy* cards had to get Leia's slave-girl outfit out of their system. I have no objection to sexy pin-ups of Leia, but I hope future artists' imaginations extend beyond the brass bathing suit. Leia's sex appeal has been evident in everything she has worn. And I wonder what styles of lingerie are popular in a galaxy far away. (Hey! Somebody has to think about these things.)

If I remember correctly, Rieekan's death in TESB was filmed, but ended up on the cutting room floor. So that plot point in your universe is at least semi-canon.

If you truly met a man who fit your ideal Romantic Hero, are you sure you'd really want him? He sounds glum and neurotic to me. Be careful what you wish for...

Carolyn Golledge: What is more important — the author's intent in a work of art, or what the audience sees/feels regardless? The subjective nature of art leads me to conclude the latter.

The first thing *all* of us do when we write fan fiction is "customize" it. We do this by emphasizing this, de-emphasizing that, and otherwise treating the source material like silly putty. Fan fiction based on TV shows seldom copies the pace or format of the original program. I've seen things far stranger than reworking Han & Leia into a 13th Century Welsh setting. And then there is the emotional and intellectual baggage we stuff into our

writing. The thing is, we don't always agree on what is "in character", and arguing over what is can lead to things like the "Church of Ford/Cathedral of Luke" unpleasantness.

Would smuggling water to Tatooine really be cost effective? If water was that precious wouldn't everyone be wearing "stillsuits"?

Amanda Palumbo: The quote I remember from Bjo Trimble was, "Put any three Trek fen together and you'll have *four* differing opinions." I know this to be true, because I'm the one usually carrying the spare.

Gerald Crotty: The printed word does have an unfortunate lack of vocal inflection and facial expression. It would be nice if we had punctuation marks to make up for that lack, but we might end up with more "inflection marks" than letter. Perhaps the Alderaani or Corellian written language contains inflection marks?

Jennifer Moore: It's interesting that most of us don't like-being pegged as either JAMs or CMLs. If we say it Changed My Life it comes close to admitting fanatical devotion. If we say it's Just A Movie it seems almost disrespectful. I think if you're here, reading this letterzine, then it must have changed your life to some degree.

There is a Japanese word to describe a type of fiction or animation — *ecchi* (pronounced eh-chē) meaning "mild lechery". I think we might find it useful to describe some types of adult fan fiction.

The Vader vs. Energizer Bunny commercial just about blew my mind! Their recreation of the carbon-freeze chamber was astounding. Call me a sick puppy if you like, but I wouldn't mind having a complete set of Energizer Bunny commercials.

One last thing... Matthew Whitney, please come home! I miss you!

Ditto, Catriona Campbell!

I don't want to set the world on fire, I just want to light a flame in your heart...

NOT GAFIATED

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January 29, 1995

I was all set to start an LoC explaining that I was going to "gafiate" for a while and let my SE subscription expire, when a couple factors changed my mind. First, I set about reading the latest issue with a more involved heart, wanting to submit a parting LoC, and found that old SW vigor returning. Life's been complicated for the last couple of years, and the luxury of fandom has often been shifted to

back burners. When I have had time for fannish activities, its often been other genres (such as B7) that I've found my personal fires burning. As much as I remain a SW fan to the core, for a long while the intensity has not been urgent. But seriously contemplating cutting my "official" tie has actually rejuvenated my love of the Saga.

The second factor is the "apparent" real possibility that there will be new films quite soon, and I want to be a part of that! Since the late-80's I've been totally convinced that Lucas had finished all the SW films he'd ever make. The every so often excitement that LFL was going into pre-pre-production, only to be disappointed *every* time left me jaded (but never bitter). At least the trilogy was complete and I'd loved each episode. But, I do think the murmurings, rumors, and announcements we've been hearing of late are the real McCoy. If nothing else, I'm virtually certain the special edition of SW/ANH is for real, and that delights me to no end. We've been pleading for that since we learned of the out-takes of Biggs and Jabba. Are we setting ourselves up for another fall? Perhaps, but my reason for believing these announcements after several years of skepticism is that IMO LFL is taking a lesson from Paramount. Seeing the huge profits they're making off their ST cash cow, I think George is finally willing to stake the mega-millions the films will take to produce, confident he'll be able to make it back. Cold, bottom-line thinking, but when the issue involves more money than we can possibly ever dream of, I cannot find fault.

So, let me shift gears to discuss pro- v. fan-writing. "Pro-fiction" is not a dirty word in my book. I agree with many that there is fan stuff that is infinitely better, but there's still some quality pro-stuff out there. Fan writing (and art) is the product of love, and that warms the heart even when the end product is less than hoped for. As a sometimes fanfic writer myself, I have known some of my pieces didn't entirely work or at least should've been improved, and have been relieved that most will read my meager efforts with a generous eye. And always when I read others' stuff, I think of the author/artist as a kindred spirit. But not all the pro authors are uncaring hacks, or so I hope. We know many arose from fannish ranks. When a pro-novel is a dog, tho', I fear we too quickly toss them off as just in it for the buck because they received a paycheck.

If a pro-novel sells, at least it helps to keep the genre live. Guarantee, if the new SW products were not selling, there'd be no talk of new films. What have I bought/read lately? A fair question, and the answer is almost nothing. Blame it on being overwhelmed several years back by the flood of ST novels. The only way I could ever hope to keep up would be to stop reading any other subject. (Alas, the same goes for most fanlit, as well.) Being too much a fan of Shakespeare, and many *great* current pro-writers, I

was unwilling to do that. So, I've purposely avoided most ST/SW novels, with rare exceptions.

My only major SW purchase in years has been the boxed set of 4-CD soundtracks. That is a superb item, and I recommend it to everyone with absolutely no qualifications. Anyone without them can hardly say they have even the soundtrack of ANH, what with all the additional tracks available here. As for other stuff, I've gotten one trilogy of books and a couple of comix series.

Marti Schuller: In SE40 you said you believe that the Emperor/Vader considered Yoda a myth: I like it! Maybe there were no Jedi academies, but instead all training was one-on-one, secret, and so on. Only those Jedi trained by Yoda would know where to find him (w/ new students brought by former pupils). Reason: to insure the order would survive if one/many succumbed to the Dark Side. In effect, a quarantine. If a Jedi turned to the Dark and "took out" others, there would still be pockets of Light Siders. Perhaps the upheaval we see in the films is but one of a number of Dark Ages/Renaissance transitional periods of the order?

Also Marti's topic: When did Vader see the Emperor to be evil? Definitely before "It is too late for me." He'd been plotting against the Emp as far back as TESB ("Join me and we will rule the galaxy..."). I think Vader is sincere in that offer to Luke, and that he was not using it as a ploy and planning to turn him over to the Emp later. (Something I addressed in a story of nearly a decade ago. Ouch! Age creeping up on me.) But, evil doers will often betray one another without seeing each other as evil. Further, I think all evil doers do not even see themselves as evil.

Example: Tarkin. In his eyes, the destruction of Alderaan was necessary for the good of the galaxy, preserving order and civilization from those anarchistic rebels. Like a surgeon cutting away diseased flesh to save the body. So, the question remains, when did Vader first see the Emp as evil, leading him to lamenting to Luke that it was "too late?" I say it begins with his mind link with Luke at the end of TESB, when Luke is lying nearly delirious in the bay of the *Falcon*. When Vader looks into his son's mind, some of Luke flows across, and maybe for a fleeting moment Darth sees the world through Luke's eyes. In that brief exchange, he may have felt an echo of the good man he once was, and starts to see all he's lost, and then the evil of the Empire and Emperor.

A. G. Steyn: Re the timeline of the Saga, I'd toss out the original indications of Luke being 18/20 and Leia aged 16 on the basis that no one then involved with SW ever knew it'd be the financial hit it was, leading to a series of films. Lucas structured it to evoke the format and excitement of serials, with preceding events and a cliffhanger ending, but the last thing on his mind was the complexity of a timeline that most filmgoers wouldn't give half a thought to. He

was probably still debating the plot element of the two being siblings, so the disparity of the ages of Luke and Leia I rate as a non-issue.

That the prequels are to be set 40, rather than 20 years earlier does pose a problem. Ben's comment that a "young Jedi named Darth Vader" killed Luke's father will be a formidable logic problem, especially for the placement of the twins' birth, as your LoC pointed at. Too early and that throws out Luke and Leia being about 20 in ANH. If the prequels begin 40 years before ANH and then progress over a decade or so, how will that tie in with Ben's statement that Vader was a pupil of his until he turned to evil? As you say, did Anakin father the children or had he become Vader at that point? Allow me to propose a way out theory: the children are conceived and then removed from the womb of their mother for a duration, replaced a decade later by some "Clone" technology, allowed to continue their maturation, and were born some number of years after conception — meant to be the last of hope of the Jedi.

Branching off to discuss another genre for a moment, reactions to ST: *Voyager*? I've loved the first two episodes. I've heard some griping over the blatant politically correct feel of the crew make-up, but those folk are missing the boat. These are great characters! This show has all the makings of a show I'm really going to get involved in (rather than watch to pass time).

Mary Jo Fox: Re the difference between SW & ST: I see it as SW looks back and inside for mythic roots, while ST looks out and forward to the future/new possibilities. That's how I approach each, thus why I feel they both fulfill different needs.

Here's a gripe about language in SF/F stories (media, not just fan stuff): the use of dull descriptions such as "first meal" for breakfast. Such stiff expressions sound like recitations from Webster's, rather than language. Yeah, I know the writer is trying to convey that an alien species has a completely different word for our common expressions, so are giving a sort of universal translation, but whenever I come across such examples I am really knocked out of the plot. This fits into the discussion of using various "profane" expressions, when the new culture created would have no knowledge of those terms. My problem is that a truly alien culture wouldn't understand a single word we'd use (no matter what Earth language was used), so allowing them to use our language for pages-upon-pages, and then to trip over something like "breakfast" is ludicrous. The opposite extreme of loading up the story with alphabet soup words, heavy on z's and triple consonants, is just as bad — or worse. Good writing is a fine line.

Until next issue . . . MTFBWY!

PEGGY SUE RETURNS

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Hiddy-ho! That deadline for #40 came and went before I had a chance to get an answer out to you. For anyone who hasn't heard the news yet, I *finally* got a job out here in Maryland. In fact, it's better than anything I'd hoped to find, so I'm quite ecstatic. The only thing that sucks is that it took sooooo long to find, that I'm now firmly in debt, thank you, Discover Card. I guess it takes a little sacrifice to gain a little more. So ist das Leben.

Z. P. Florian: So when am I going to see you, woman! I'm right next door now. Guess I'll have to stop by for a cup of sugar or something, huh?

One question: Where the heck do you get all that time/energy/inspiration to do all that?!

Marti Schuller: I really enjoyed your story, "Her Ladyship", in *Tremor* 8. Even though I know where your heart lies fan-wise, I've always enjoyed your Han & Leia pieces. I strongly believe that Leia began her political career in this fashion; learning from the experiences of an older mentor would be far more valuable than all the lectures in some classroom. She would also be an excellent teacher for the next generation. The story was emotional without becoming melodramatic. I especially liked the fact that you gave our favorite trio a successful future by way of Leia's reflections on the past. Lately, it seems rare that they are given any kind of hopeful future after the war, which I find depressing at times. Granted, I'm a sucker for a happy ending. It was probably my favorite piece in the zine, because I'm especially prone to a good Leia story, which can be even more rare. Let's see some more.

You will be attending MediaWest this year, right? We'll have to get together in the bar again, since it seems to be one of the few places where one can get away from the hustle and relax for a while.

The motley, moldering Dead Bothans: I'm still working on the pledge, but I do have a couple of possibilities for the anthem. Now, if I were talented, I'd draw up a membership card, too. Liz?

Had a great time at Planet Hollywood during our D.B. Society meeting. I must protest, however, the breach of protocol in not reading the minutes from our last meeting. And if our dearly departed Head Dead Bothan would kindly remember to bring along her ode to the Dead Bothans (a.k.a. Oh Bothan, My Bothan), we could begin our meetings with the proper amount of revulsion — I mean, respect, due our unique society. Thank you.

Debbie Kittle: Thanks for letting me tag along on your shopping — or should I say plundering trips to Another Universe, etc. I'm not sure about how grateful I should be considering it's costing me a fortune, but it sure is fun! Sigh. At least I'm not a student anymore as all this SW stuff floods the market. It's hard enough to turn down *half* of it, let alone everything! Oh well, keep an eye out for one of those pewter Han Solo's, huh?

A. G. Steyn: Ob dieses brief auf Deutsch ist, ist nicht so wichtig, aber ich kann immer üben. (Naja, kann ich nicht buchstabieren!) Natürlich kann ich besser sprechen als schreiben, aber ich habe schon so viele vorgessen. Gibt es eine Chance, daß wir in Lansing treffen werden? MediaWest macht viel Spass!! Hoeffentlich, bis dann. (English = My German sucks asteroids!)

Belea T. Keeney: Welcome to SE and the rest of your life! Active fandom can tend to take over, but who cares! It's fun!

If you'd really like a peek into SW fandom's past, check out the old newsletter *Jundland Wastes*. I know that's easy for me to say, since I managed to find the entire set in excellent condition for about \$10 (Oh, for the days when fans were dumping their collections dirt cheap!). I'd suggest getting in contact with Ming Wathne at the Corellian Archives (see the last page of this issue). She probably has the entire set in her collection. If not, drop a note to me and I'll see what I can do. The newsletter will give you a good idea of the kind of nail-biting, hair-pulling and name-calling that went on between the fans and Lucasfilm, and between the fans themselves. (To think that the two versions of *Slow Boat to Bespin* helped to spark off SexWars here in the U.S. They're rather tame by today's standards.)

Right-on about Lucas' demonstrated attitude towards the middle-saga. Frankly, I can't get all excited about if/when/what he plans for the next three films. If the "pro" novels are any indication of his creative bent, I'll stick to our fandom where the bottom line isn't the most important factor. I believe Lucas is the origin of most of the false rumors that have been flying for the past 10 years, with the sole intention of selling toys and preventing those outside of active fandom from entirely forgetting about his little project. It seems as if he changes his mind from day to day; last I heard, he isn't even sure if he'll indeed do the first trilogy next. I know what I like so I'm sticking with Han/Leia/Luke; they're part of what fascinated me in the first place. Things like *Tales from the Jedi* leave me unmoved, mostly because they don't involve the people I've come to care about, but also partially because they don't resemble the films in any other way.

Oh, the image of Dr. Lillith Sternon-Crane leading a group therapy for Leia, Ripley and Sarah Connor is precious! I think Marion Ravenwood could sit in as well.

Pat Grant: It's great to see your name in the "other side" of fandom. For some reason, few fans seem able or willing to bridge that gap between roleplay and zinedom. I suspect it's a finite amount of creative energy. At least, that's my excuse. Because the Muses are infrequent visitors to my door, I must direct the majority of my fannish time towards my "regular" story writing. It doesn't leave much time for keeping up with all the scandals and tribulations of As The F.O.E. Universe Turns.

Rest assured, I do intend to get some roleplay in this year at the con, although I'll have to limit myself to Peggy Sue Death-Hawk (yes, she back in the pink!). Believe me, she's enough!

I fully agree with you and Jacqueline Taero on whether or not the New Republic is the way to go, and if the Jedi should be made sooo important again. I tend to think that the events in Germany during the first half of this century were the main source of inspiration for Lucas' storyline, so I'm going to use an example to explain this argument.

To be brief, the Weimar (read Old) Republic was an ineffectual and corrupt government which proved unable to prevent the National Socialist takeover. Why would anyone, following the Nazi (read Imperial) regime, want to reestablish an obviously failed system? Furthermore, who ever heard of a new government being backed up by one single policeman (read Jedi)? According to the books, poor Leia could give birth to multiple sets of quintuplets, dump them *all* off at Winter's Day Care, and the toddlers *still* wouldn't be able to keep the riff-raff under control. Luke clearly isn't up to the task, and Lando wouldn't know a Force Talent if it bit him. It's quite obvious that good ol' Han is our only hope, and we all know how the "pro" novels are treating him (*Truce* excluded); he isn't much more than a bumbling stud for future Jedi. (You know, it's a wonder these people won the war in the first place.)

In short, the New Republic would have to *learn* to survive without the Jedi, since it's going to take forever for enough Force Talents to be assembled and trained, thus the question is academic (every pun intended). If the Jedi are *that* important, the new government would be long gone by the time the Jedi could be effective. The universe certainly isn't going to stand around and wait while the Jedi reassemble. Besides, why even bother introducing a problematic element (read Jedi) into the system if they weren't able to stop the Emperors' rise to power in the first place. Maybe the answer is to come up with a better system of security and power-checks. Luke would have to get a life, enter a government job training program and learn to flip bantha burgers. (Luke fans, please don't be offended by my curtness; I'm just trying to make the point that things change.)

Re: the Cantina. I'd love to provide the music for the dance again this year. I've got a few more good songs, but

lost a couple along the way. Let me know if you're game, and I'll send you a list of some songs I think would be good but don't have access to myself. Then maybe you could place a note in F.O.E.'s newsletter for volunteers. Will Joe be the D.J. again? Do you know if he'll have the same stereo set-up?

Is Chewie male? Damned straight! He's the sexiest one I know!

Louise Turner: I borrowed a copy of *Bad Feeling* from Deed Bothan Debbie K. and I think you did a great job, especially for a first effort (right?). In fact, I wouldn't mind it a bit if you forwarded a flier w/ prices and such. More power to you.

That's a fantastic twist for a story, your idea about Bail Organa (or better yet, someone else within the Royal House) arranging to hand over Leia to the Imperials. Hint hint, nudge nudge, say no more.

As for whether Rebels and Imperials would socialize, I can once again cite from history. The most documented case, of course, was in the trenches of France during Christmas of 1914; photos even exist of those few days when German and British troops met in No-Man's Land, sang songs and even exchanged gifts. There have been many other first-hand accounts throughout both World Wars, but they weren't officially reported, and they certainly weren't used for propaganda reasons, unlike that time at the beginning of the First World War. The governments and military command felt that such occurrences weakened the men's will to fight, and so forbid that kind of fraternization. When met face-to-face with the enemy, however, many young men realized that political theories and moralistic differences didn't really matter on the battlefield; instead, they saw a fellow kid whose only passion was to go home to his family. I don't see how those fighting in the SW universe would be any different. Aside from the usual element of fanatics and political party members, all any of them would want is an end to the war.

(As a side note, if anyone's interested in finding out more about personal accounts of the Second World War, I strongly suggest reading *The Good War* by Studs Terkel. It's an oral history of that time, from around the world and from all sides of the conflict.)

Oh, and thanks for the N.R.T.T. I cringe every time I see or hear criticism towards T. Zahn, only because I fear someone may get us confused.

Carolyn Golledge: Just wait 'til you read what I've got cooking now. It's pushing 80 pages — someone help me!!!

Congrats on breaking through to the other side. Knew you'd do it.

Ming Wathne: I stand corrected, and agree with you completely. Let's just say that that's what I intended to say, but didn't say. Okay?

Tim Blaes: Good point, about SW needing both good

characters and SF. I just feel that the characters we got to know in the films are not progressing in the pro-novels. If anything, they're regressing (re: Wolverton's reason for dumbing down Han Solo was to make him like the Han Solo of *Star Wars* — I think he's wrong in both intent and result) or have simply changed with no explanation. Whether these stories had been written by unpaid fans or not wouldn't have changed my opinion about the quality of the books. Perhaps I wouldn't be so vocal, but on the other hand I resent being told that these stories are "official canon." How could anyone claim to have an inside track to the truth, when Lucas himself doesn't know?

Oh, and I had to laugh at your statement to Brian Harris about the MediaWest "stag" room being short one member. I won't ask which one. (Hey, I'd have to lift my head to get my mind out of the gutter!)

I agree. I think it'd be great — and probably quite an adventure! — if Carrie Fisher wrote a SW pro-novel. On the other hand, Lucas is such a prude that she'd probably have to tone her humor down to the point that it'd come out flat. After all, there's only so much creativity one can put into a paint-by-numbers story. Who knows? I'd still give her the benefit of a doubt.

Gerald Crotty: Congrats on the STAR aWARD. You deserved it!

I second your comments on the Luke/Leia scene in ROTJ. The scene is still one of my favorites in the film (granted, that's not saying much) but it still leaves a lot to be desired. My solution is to simply fill in the gaps, *i.e.* immediately following Han and Leia's embrace. Actually, I've written the scene twice already, and I still have some ideas left over. I believe Leia does tend to internalize, and she might have gone into some sort of temporary denial, but yes, there should have been *something*. I rationalize that she simply hasn't made the connection yet. She's still absorbing the idea that Vader is *Luke's* father, and hasn't gotten around yet to tracing the family tree once she learns that she and Luke are siblings. That, or she figures that she's a lost cause already, where as Luke is still their "Last Hope", thus explaining her immediate concern for him above herself. Think about it: Leia's comment about her inability to have the power that he does is very self-defeatist (read unlike Leia), so one could even reason that she's not quite herself in the first place.

As for male/female writing partnerships, sorry, but I can't think of a single example in my collection. I think it'd be an interesting collaboration.

I guess it's arguable whether or not the Emperor knows about Yoda, but I think Vader does not. In TESB, Vader said to Luke: "Obi Wan has trained you well." One could reason that Vader took Kenobi's old threat ("stronger than you could possibly imagine") to heart and believed that Kenobi continued Luke's training even though the Jedi was

dead. He has no idea that Yoda took over Luke's training, right?

Mary Jo Fox: Hello fellow Leia fan and Dead Bothan! Yes, it is tragic to think that there was anti-Leia propaganda right from the start. You're probably right about the motives, but I think a good dose of jealousy is also to blame. After all, only Leia gets to run around the universe hobnobbing with the influential, kiss Han (and some would argue Luke — heh heh) and generally have a good time, although she might argue with that. Some handle this by either trashing Leia or simply avoiding her completely. I personally put myself in her place :-]

As for the pro novels, unfortunately we have clashed on this. I'll admit, you're right; were these stories written by unpaid fans making an honest effort to express their vision of the SW universe, I probably wouldn't be so verbal with my opinions out of mutual respect. On the other hand, I resent being told that these stories are "canon" and that mine are a waste of time and effort. No fan would be so rude. If these "pro" authors lack the courtesy to respect their fellow writers and reading audience (keep in mind who kept SW alive all this time so that they'd have something to sell today), I hardly think it's fair to *demand* respect in return. That's not how respect works. I do have a lot of respect for Kathy Tyers, and it's not just because I thought hers was the best effort to date on the mass market. She has demonstrated an understanding of how fandom works and does anything *but* mock it. Ask Carolyn Golledge. Finally, even if these other stories had been produced by one of my favorite fan writers, I *still* wouldn't have liked most of them. I do have the right to *not* like something, just as much as one has the right to enjoy something else. I could go into a long list of reasons for why I was unable to suspend my disbelief while trying to read them, but this letter's long enough already. I just want you to know that I don't feel that my criticism is too harsh or negative — I gave every one of the books a fair shot (I myself was verbally attacked for saying that I found one or two moments in entertaining, so perhaps I'm more sensitive to this type of thing than most!) and I'll admit that each book does have some redeeming qualities, but overall, aside from *Truce*, they didn't stir or inspire me. It happens all the time in fandom too.

Had to laugh at your "Han's a Doritos man!" That's too true sometimes, but I like to think I'm not *that* bad. And I also agree with your view on SW needing the humor as much as the darker emotions and the action. Even though I still follow the *Dark Empire* comics, every one of them has eerie green light shooting from their eyes, even when they're looking through hooded eyes, which is most of the time. Which film was that? Doesn't the sun ever shine since the Empire collapsed?

Well, I'd better wrap this baby up before it gets too out

of hand. To all those I didn't get to address directly, have a great year and I hope to see all of you at MediaWest. Fly Casual!

WILLING TO CRITICIZE PRO NOVELS

Jacqueline Taero
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Greetings, all.

Mary Jo Fox: I approach the pro novels the same way I approach a fanzine — in good faith, hoping for the best. I thought that one of the pro SW books was terrific, some were merely tolerable, and I threw one across the room in disgust. This is exactly the same as my reaction to fanfic — some garners a shrug and a yawn, some I cherish forever, and some goes crashing against the nearest wall.

As for criticism, I will admit to using a double standard. I'm reluctant to criticize a fan writer who is motivated simply by love of the SW universe. I bloody well *will* criticize a pro writer who has been paid for his or her work (plus taking \$25 out of my pocket) if I cannot recognize the canonical characters and/or find plot holes the size of the Death Star. If that constitutes bias, so be it. I do try to be specific in my criticism and to justify my reactions, detailing the reasons and the basis for them. If someone else loves the same book that I despise — fine. That's what makes horse races.

Z. P. Florian: Whether Darth's fall was caused by the Emperor or was something totally independent of Old Prune Face, there's another question that needs pondering. Who was responsible for the Emperor's slide into Darkness? Was Palpie just a rotten kid who grew up to be a power-mad Force user, or did someone turn him to the Dark Side? If he did have Jedi training, could Palpatine have been Yoda's Darth Vader?

Ming Wathne: Re SW royalty and whether the titles are inherited, earned, or whatever, here's a possibility that's been overlooked — can titles be purchased?

Catherine Churko: I'm not convinced that Yoda tells Ben much of anything, via the Force or otherwise. I have the feeling that Yoda keeps his own counsel and not even Ben really knows what he's thinking.

Gerald Crotty: Good analysis of the Luke/Leia scene in ROTJ. Regarding your other remarks, you're absolutely correct in noting that elements of irony or sarcasm-humor, too, I might add — are frequently missed or misinterpreted by the reader. Er, re your comment to Louise Turner, what do you mean, *yours* is the only opinion that counts? How can this be when I know for a fact that *mine* is the only opinion that counts?! Hmm, before we get jumped on for

this little exchange, do you think we should tell them that we're only joking? (Even if we have to lie?)

Louise Turner: Naw, ethnic origin has nothing to do with it. Threepio is a pain in the posterior — English, Scots, American, he'd still be a pain in the posterior. It's poor little Artoo who does all the work, gets no credit and no respect.

Carolyn Golledge: I just don't like the idea of Luke and Leia as twins, but I don't think we need to go as far as having one frozen for a few years while the other progressed naturally. We all noticed in TESB that time on Dagobah seems to be out of whack with the rest of the galaxy. The simple explanation is that one twin was on Dagobah and the other wasn't. One aged two years while the other aged two months. It's as good an explanation as any ... but I still don't like it.

Brian Harris: Kenobi “allowed” to go into exile? Okay, but why? Could you go into a bit more detail? I think I have lots of problems with that notion, but I'll give you a chance to explain it before I make up my mind.

A. G. Stevn: Beru as Luke's mother and Darth's erstwhile ladylove ... you know, that works. That would certainly explain her comment about Luke having “too much of his father in him”. Who better than she to say so?!

A'NOTHER NEWBIE

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Hi, I'm Minky, another newbie to the SE world. A pleasure to meet all of you, and I want to say “thanks” to everyone who's helped me get acquainted, especially Z. P. and Ming. Ming, thanks for your comments in #40 about shortcuts. Maybe a glossary of acronyms is needed for us neophytes ... IFDM.

Special thanks to Cheree for doing all this.

Louise: Ah, yes, bad boys= romantic heroes. My first love was Adam Cartwright, all dark and broody. Bad boys are so much more challenging than nice guys like Han. Han is a tough, hardy survivor, but only a wee bit wicked; he's not truly Bad. Vader is my romantic hero of the trilogy, though I confess to a lifetime of forays into confused, lost, sensitive blonds (with Bad potential) like Luke, Illya K., Rutger Hauer, James Spader. There's just something about blonds in helpless bondage to their destiny ...

A. G.: Re Luke “groping” Vader's thigh. Untrue. He was merely conducting an extensive tactile reconnaissance for his father's hand because, while hands are traditionally

located at the ends of one's arms, in this particular case (given the preceding events) Luke could not be certain without a meticulous and exhaustive exploration that left no stones unturned. And a damn *fine*, firm thigh it is, too. (Of course, a simpler explanation is that Luke may have hoped that his father would become his Jedi ThighMaster.) As for the timeline, I vote for Anakin being 8 and just beginning Jedi training when the new trilogy starts (remember, Luke was “too old” for Jedi training) and in his 20's for the second and third movies. That would make him 48 and deliciously prime for ANH.

Belea: Vader only looked that way immediately after the mask was removed; in a few more minutes, his face would have sprung back into its fine, firm shape. Unless he accidentally used his Thighmaster on his cheeks instead of on his fine, firm thighs.

Marti: Perhaps Darth didn't go after Obi-Wan because he was (wisely) leery of him. After all, OWK was his Master which implies much higher levels of skills (if not common sense). And OWK had possibly just mutilated him — that would make him less than eager for a second confrontation. Or, alternatively, he had an emotional attachment to OWK that caused his reluctance. As for seeing the Emperor's evil, I agree that Vader knew and accepted that “evil” but IMO his definition of “evil” was probably much different than ours. He was following a powerful, charismatic commander, his teacher of many years. Evil can be subjective and very dependent upon where you're standing. When he saved Luke, he chose to save his son's life more than he rejected Palpatine and evil. Rejecting Palpie's teachings would have meant concluding that his life's path had been the wrong one, and he didn't do that. Admitting to Luke that there was still good in him wasn't the same as saying he'd chosen the wrong path. I visualize him in Jedi Heaven or wherever, still arguing with Ben and Yoda about the value of the Dark.

Why can't the Alliance survive without Jedi? Because a Jedi said so and Jedi Know Best. So why is it: in the trilogy, no one mourns their disappearance except other Jedi. No one says, “Gee, it'd sure be nice to have a Jedi around right about now” or “Gosh, wish we'd done something to prevent that darn massacre”. No one asks Luke about Jedi or comments on his lightsaber. The only Jedi references made are to sorcery, ancient/hokey religions, conjure, etc. Those are words of fear, not respect. If the Rebel Alliance really needed/wanted the Jedi, they would have cherished/protected the last one and not risked him as a fighter pilot or sent him off on the Forest Moon caper. Ben's description of Jedi Knights as peacekeepers for the galaxy smacks of *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and its platoons of roving, robotic Klaatuu killer cops. Maybe Ben and Yoda were in hiding not from the Emperor but rather from the irate peoples of the galaxy —

the same people who stood by and watched the rest of the Jedi slaughtered. Perhaps the disappearance of the Jedi was a great relief to more than just the proponents of Darkness.

Bye for now, and thanks for letting me come and play with you!

WHAT IS A DROID?

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January 11, 1995

Happy New Year!

First things first:

The Winter 94 edition of SE arrived here yesterday, and I was pleased to learn from it that Randy has found a new job. Congratulations. What a fantastic way to start a new year!

SE brought a lot of laughs this time around. The cartoon "One Big Happy" is a riot. It reminds me so much of my Granny... she was exactly like that. The SW drinking game had me in stitches. Just my kind of humor. Hey, in case a con hotel is too small for a good blaster battle, this game might be just what it takes to save the day. So we all might be well advised to keep the rules handy.

Keeping eyes and ears open (sometimes it's hard to do that, tho'... especially reading some of those official, GL sanctioned SW novels), I tend to find bunches of things with an ever so slight SW flavor in daily life. Songs, for instance (from Tom T. Hall's "May The Force Be With You, Always", and Weird Al Yankovich's "Yoda", to an old surfing tune called "The Wedge" — which of course has nothing to do with the guy in orange, but anyway..., to insane Peter Seller's "Goodness, Gracious Me!" and "Interview with Sir Eric Goodness". Then there are names that keep cropping up in newspapers, warehouse catalogs, magazines... I found an item in a furniture catalog (Swedish company "Ikea") that is called "Dodonna" (!) and in our local paper I ran across a note on a scientific discovery somewhere in the Himalayan region, if I remember this right, mentioning the Sullustans. What's this galaxy coming to? Even reading a book on the meaning behind popular names made me chuckle. "Mark" ... from "Marcus" = little war-like-one/little warrior. Ahem!

Am I the only one having these "problems"??? Should I seek professional help?

My last LoC:

This timeline bit... I re-thought and re-worked my concept a bit and am now in the midst of compiling a SW calender of events (birthdays of all characters, who when where at what time, etc.). It's coming along nicely, and so far the only person I had a bit of trouble with is blasted Biggs — of all persons. But that calender is of course only *my* conception of the proceedings, and I do freely admit that I decided to ignore some tiny bits and pieces fed to us by Lucas and other "officials" that are somewhat contradictory.

Yeah, those official books on the saga... Isn't it bizarre that we (amateur writers, editors, publishers) go through great lengths in trying to establish plausible plotlines and being imaginative and original, when on the other hand professional writers get away with murder? Snooping through the novelization of the SW movies two things immediately jumped at me like a Cholla cactus: Obi-Wan's reference to a *duck* ("Even a duck has to learn how to swim..") and the mention of "a *dog* barking in the distance" when Luke drives into Anchorhead. That falls into the same line as the Immelmann I mentioned in my last letter. Blah!

And I'm more than happy that Hollywood meanwhile decided against Julia Roberts as HF's love interest in the *Sabrina* remake.

Anyone seen this strange interview with Patrick Stewart on Jay Leno's *Tonight Show*? Where he kept yakking about a crossover STTNG / SW and about Leia being the only woman in the galaxy Captain Picard might consider worth marrying ... and about Picard not having had a real love affair in all these years and Han (according to the *Courtship* book) always being absent anyway... Topping this all off by stating that he had talked to Harrison (!) about this and that he (and Carrie) would be willing to do this menage-a-trois...

It is, however, possible that Mr. Stewart had had one drink too many that night!!!

Other people's LoCs:

Marti Schuller: Huh? Obi-Wan alone in the desert?? Hm, why do you think he took up teaching nice, innocent and still very young men (like Anakin and Luke) the ways of the Force? The man was a closet pedophilic! (OUW! OUCH! AH! Stop.. Time out! Quit throwing your household after me... I was just kiddin'. Geez, can't you people take a joke?)

Debbie Kittle: Dear dead Bothan. If you want winter, please come over and join me here in my office. Our heater system is being repaired momentarily and the powerlines are overloaded, so for one week I've been sitting in an icy room (outside temps: 20 to 32°F; inside temps: 50°F at the max.) and experiencing one power failure after another (computer, fax, phone, coffee machine... everything deader than even the deadest of

Bothans). One more day of this and I call in sick!!

Belea Keeney: Welcome to the LoC side of the Force. Cameo roles for HF, CF, MH?? Don't I wish. I had this secret dream that GL would use them in small lead-ins for the new episodes. Like: Either one (or all three, preferably) nosing through ancient files in some central archive, trying to investigate about their own ancestors. Altho' after all that happened, Luke and Leia may be less than eager to find out more about any possible additional unexpected relationships. It would be understandable. ("Hang on to your earmuffs, sis ... I just discovered that our mother was Jabba the Hutt!")

Louise Turner: Thanks for leaving me the Corellian. You may amuse yourself with the squad now. But... what've you got planned for the rest of the day? In case you run out of flyboys before the clock strikes high noon, you can always desert the Rebs and try out the Imps. This galaxy has fortunately only a severe shortage of she-folks. Aren't we in luck?

About Wedgie... Did you see that interview in the latest installment of the Lucasfilm zine? GL token survivor, huh?

Reading this official zine I notice that more and more interviews with secondary characters keep coming up, and they all somehow (some straight out, some between the lines) let it shine through that they would not mind doing their roles once more. Jeremy Bulloch would *love* to be Boba again. Denis Lawson is not above doing another "Tour of Duty" in the Rebellion. So I ask you, Georgie-baby: Even if the three leading stars are no longer willing to do another SW installment, wouldn't a sequel with some of the former secondary characters be better than a prequel with complete unknowns?? I'd rather watch the adventures of the "real" Boba and Wedge than those of the "wrong" Luke, Han, Leia, Ben and Darthie. Sorry, but that's the way the *Falcon* crumbles...

Ming Wathne: The Force is with thee, oh great keeper of the grail (i.e. Corellian Archives).

What is a droid? Hm, if you take the scientific approach then droid, being an abbreviation of android, is a mechanical man — a robot that resembles a human. Lt. Cmdr. Data of STTNG would be the classic example. Threepio could possibly be counted in, as he is of humanoid shape and functions in many ways like a human being. R2, on the other hand, would be just a "simple" robot. However, in the movies, he's referred to as a droid. So, in the SW universe a droid seems to be any mechanical contraption that moves independently, has at least a — however limited — intelligence, and can "verbally" communicate with other droids, computers and also living things. The threadwell is a "droid", the vaporators are not. 2-IB and the mousedroid are droids, binary load-lifters are not. Vader, tho' more machine than man, doesn't qualify as

a droid, even if he can move independently, communicate verbally and does have brains. He has the Force, droids don't.

And no, carbonated spacers are stationary and therefore not droids, even if they have the basic intelligence and stubbornness of an R2-unit.

Upon the line of writers that never watched the movies: I recently stumbled upon a toy catalog that offered SW models. The descriptions about the TIE Interceptor are a *riot*. The person who came up with them must be the sole soul on this planet that up to now has never seen any of the three movies nor read anything on them. I'll see if I can find that page and translate it. You will roll on the floor, guaranteed!

Fan pics? An 8 x 10 of *moi*? C'mon, lady. You know me. You know what I look like. What do you want an 8 x 10 of mine for? To scare kids that refuse to go to bed? But actually, the idea isn't half bad. I wouldn't mind seeing all those folks I up to now only know by name.

Tim Blaes: Since the Force "can have a strong influence on the weak minded", mind-bending lawyers, TV execs and politicians should be a cinch. A thimbleful of the Force will be sufficient. If you find out more about the "Go Sith" Do-It-Yourself home studying course, let me know where I can order it. With "Uncle Palpie" and "Uncle Addie" (Germans ought to know who *that* is) gone the way of the T-Rex, it's high time that this galaxy gets some new "rmanagers". You take North America, I take Europe... (sorry, Fiorenzo — I plumb forgot that you plan on joining us here on the unwashed side of the Force).

And a SW novel by everybody's fave princess is just what I hope for. Another project for our home-studying course: let's mindbend Carrie Fisher. Altho' it might not work. The woman is no lawyer. She has brains.

OK, that shall be it for this time. Still have to put the finishing touches on another story (someone out there will be so unlucky as to receive it "soon". That is, in January '95). Till next time I'm frostbittenly yours...

ORGY OF AGREEING

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Hi, people. First of all, thanks for Maggie's detailed, fascinating, enlightening summary of the past — good to know that anything we can argue about had already been argued to death in the glorious past of the fandom! So let's not argue — just enjoy. Ok, ok, arguing is also enjoyable.

But right now, I will engage in an orgy of agreeing! I agree with:

Mayers: It is disturbing that fans would take the pro novels as canon. Lucas himself said that nothing is canon but what we had seen in the movies.

Schuller: I like the idea of Luke finding strong ties with his students, and then he won't necessarily need family. And when are you going to write a story about Kenobi's desert companion? A lovely lady Jawa perhaps. Who knows what's under the Jawa's hood? (Only Bentrup ...) Or maybe he had Anakin's wife hidden away somewhere. Leia said, "she died when I was very young" — but that was about the same info Luke had of his father, who was very much alive! Maybe she was on Tatooine in hiding, watching over her son...

I love the Energizer bunny commercial!

Stevn: Yeah, arrgghhh... The Sturm und Drang thing turned me off the pro novels. What silliness. Why invent alien creatures and then give them Earth names? If it is a spoof, ok, but not in something we are supposed to take seriously. As for the fascinating bit of gossip about Han's short (was it me?) girlfriend, who was supposed to be a cross between a guinea pig and a dog... A space schweinhundess! Gods, I wish Lucas had kept the idea. Maybe we nasty-minded fan authors are more true to his original ideas than he, himself?

Keeney: Thanks for saying I have the experience and background to know what's good for me in fandom, but I think you overestimate me. My head and several brick walls could testify... However, it is absolutely true that Lucas sells his universe (let him say that anything a fan does desecrates the sandbox after the Energizer bunny!!!) and fan writers do it for love.

Grant: Well said about Ben's intentions. I also agree with you on the Han/Luke slash; it is very hard to imagine that both of them suddenly drop Leia and start to be frantic about each other. But — if someone can write a story that'd make me believe it, I won't reject it at all. For example, deep psychology: Leia dies and the two men transfer their affection for her to each other, in the desperate pit of grief. Re: donations, I would love to donate a copy of my zine, but hey, I'm not sure you'd want it!

Churko: Loved your musings on what Ben, Yoda, Luke could do with futuresight: don't just muse, write it! I think Ben was a diplomat/teacher, while Yoda was basically a philosopher/guru, and Luke was a warrior/prophet type. Anakin was probably a warrior/lord and the Emperor a conqueror/guru. The events proved that Luke's insight was definitely the best among them, so perhaps he had a strong Forcegift to see the future and feel the emotions of others, while Kenobi was off with a mile. Vader was *not* more machine than man ... and it was Vader who had felt Kenobi's presence, not vice versa. Kenobi didn't even feel Leia being on the Death Star. And Yoda

didn't go off to kill Vader, although he had tons of Force: why? Couldn't Yoda face even the Emperor himself? With Yoda and Ben joining forces, why on Earth would they think that an untrained kid was their only hope? Maybe Luke was potentially a gazillion times better Jedi than the two of them put together.

Golledge: Please, please, write a story about Han smuggling contraceptives. As for "hell" and "damn", and all those fancy curses ... Read *Tremor* yet? Chewie with the translator? Good, huh? Inventing "alien" curse words can be fun, but I don't believe in covering up perfectly good bad words all the time ... besides, whenever I see something like Han saying "Get those kruppin' boots out of my way!", I feel it's a lot worse than just letting him say "damn boots". It's like a porn picture of a naked girl with black squares placed on strategic points.

Watne: Of course, outright porn should be confined to separate zines. As you say, at 20 bucks a shot, one has the right to know what is between the covers. Perhaps with a couple of adult zines around, the regular ones will be even cleaner, as the risky stories will have their own home. Besides, there is a new crop of fans, and they are *very* young; just among the kids I carpool around there are two 13 year olds just getting into fanzines. God forbid they start with Friskies. (I gave them *Tremor* to look at. They thought it was "cool".)

Blaes: Ok, you can be Czar of North America, if you really promise to kill all the lawyers and make NBC executives write down "We shouldn't have canceled Star Trek" one million times. I absolutely agree, by the way, that excessive use of mindcontrol backfires on the user, so be careful with using the Force on the NBC guys. And another thing: when you Force Lucas to do the first three movies, make sure he puts in Alan Patronis and Arandu. Maybe a Zornom?

Crotty: British, eh? "It is just as easy being rude while being polite." Nothing is as gratifying as being perfectly polite while delivering an insult. And so beautifully British. All Hungarians are in awe of the British for being able to do this, did you know that? And man, you can draw! That short-hair Luke in *Tremor*...

Mary Jo Fox: Thanks for the info on the releases. I can hardly wait to see Hambly's!!! She is really grand when it comes to suffering wizards (ah, Antryg Windrose... if anyone haven't read *The Silent Tower* trilogy, go get it now...) and I am sure she'll do something good for Luke. (She said she loves SW!) Wanna bet: in her book, Luke *volunteers* to absorb the escaped spirit of the Emperor and then starts eating ysalamiris to make sure that Palpie can't use the Force inside him. Of course the whole process is slowly destroying Luke — very, very slowly.

Yuenger: I liked *Truce* and I liked most of *Courtship* (except the Rancors). Feel better?

To all: anyone had the chance to play Gabriel Knight on CD ROM? How was Hamill in it? I would've given him Gabriel's voice, not to Tim Curry. I have no CD ROM, so I don't know how the voices turned out. (Darn good game anyhow, especially for those who like tousled blonds.) And who had heard of this other game where Hamill is actually acting?

WHIPPING BOY

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January 12, 1995

Greetings, and a great new year to everyone! Hope the holiday season was a safe and joyous one, and the resolution process is relatively painless. This new year is my personal tabula rasa, and as for 1994 ... good riddance and angst for the memories. But enough of all that; it's knowing that you folks are out there that helps me to maintain some semblance of sanity. So, as they say in the sticks, "let's commence to meetin'!"

Nora Mayers: Granted, Wolverton's treatment of the Saga (not *our* Saga, not Lucas' Saga, but The Saga) left a really sour taste in my mouth, compared to what others have done thus far. Like Foster's *Splinter, Courtship* is sort of one of those oddball, apocryphal chapters in the continuing adventures of Luke Skywalker. Did Han Solo's turn to be the whipping boy rather ungraciously fall into Dave Wolverton's laptop? No, I wasn't totally happy with the novel, but I bought it, I read it, I can accept it. Even the points that make you and me ill, blasé, blasé, blah.

But this division between professional writers and fanfic writers could be looked upon as a screen. Does a publisher really want to take a chance on an unknown quantity just because a few hundred or so people say they like the author and/or the story? Personally, I give a damn who's getting paid. If the story gets me involved and keeps me entertained and even makes me think a bit, I don't care if the author is Timothy Zahn, Veronica Wilson, or Uncle Salty living in a PI ward in Butt Necked, Iowa. To me, it is much more satisfying and a lot less constricting than becoming a slave to consumer loyalty. "Art as expression, not as market campaigns."

Pat Grant: Been a while, how are things? You brought up a couple of points I'd like to respond to, the first being the set-up of events in Anderson's trilogy. "If the New Republic is so pitiful, does it deserve to survive?" Did the original thirteen colonies deserve independence from England? Did the original *Star Trek* deserve a third

season?

In response to your response to A. G. Steyn, speculating on the social ties of a rebellion's membership, I would say that the Rebel Alliance was created by its members and supporters because life under the Imperial thumb was becoming a threat to those ties: mates, children, family, friends, not to mention the problems it created on various political, economic and environmental levels. The loners would have done it for a renewed sense of belonging. Certainly a lot of groundwork and discussion would have preceded the formal declaration of a unified intent to oppose Imperial dictate.

Marti Schuller: My condolences and sympathies to you and your family following the loss of your father. May he rest well and live happily in greener pastures. My thoughts go out also to Judith Yuenger. Hope all is going better.

Debbie Kittle: You and your snow! BRRR!! You'd never know it was winter here in Texas. As I write this, it's a pleasant 72 degrees and nary a hint of rain, though naturally that will change in the next five minutes. Cold? Well, cold to a native Texan, anyway. Right now, I hope to make it to MWC. I still haven't heard anything about my gofer membership, which to me is no big deal. Sure, I'll watch some dealers' tables and do a little grunt work, since I'm really not one for costuming (though if Z. P. Florian designed it, I'd probably be convinced to wear it). My concern is, am I gonna have time to noodle around with the guitar(s)? Say, that's a thought ... live entertainment in the cantina! Amanda, are you thinking what I'm thinking?

A. G. Steyn: Definitely in agreement with you on the subject of hardcopies. Viva las printing presses! Reading something with weight and presence and character is one of my all-time heartfelt joys, right up there with listening to vinyl LPs (remember those gatefold sleeves? Pearl Jam even wrote a song about it: "Spin the Black Circle."), taking long walks and cooking in a cast-iron skillet.

Belea Keeney: Hey, welcome! Dip in and enlighten yourself! I've only been involved, more or less, in SW fandom for, what, almost two years, Mary Jo? I tell ya, this whole thing is a real eye opener.

Catherine Churko: Terrific, thought-provoking points you brought up in regards to Jedi farseeing/clairvoyance/psychic reading. Story? The gears are turning...

Louise Turner: Hi there! As always, you bring so much to the way I look at SW, even when we agree to disagree. Brief comments to ya here, longer letter later. Character development through darkness and crisis, *not* gratuitous hurt/comfort for its own sake. Ugh, the very thought makes my stomach crawl.

Rebels and Imperials hanging out together in neutral settings? I'd imagine a few isolated instances, but the term

Rebel Alliance pretty much answers that one for me.

The concept of Rebel safeworlds is a plausible one, if said Rebels' family and friends share the same views and/or are in serious trouble with the Empire or some of the nastier elements of fringe society. Probably more often than not, a Rebel's sense of family would come from being part of a closely-knit team, rather than fond memories of kinfolk back home. The sad truth is, esprit de corps and camaraderie are often fleeting social ties which last for the duration of the mission/crisis/holiday outing/what have you. For those who go against the status quo, learning to adapt their every fiber of being to the eventuality of loss of stability and familiarity is a major survival trait.

Darth Vader as Romantic Hero? My, how times have changed. Comments, Vader fen?

Mary Jo Fox: Hi yourself, and bravo!

Amanda Palumbo: You lucky one, you! Asimov... now there's a guy who had a gift for creativatn'!

Tim Blaes: Man, no doubt is it tough getting involved in fandom, and especially being so far away from a big cluster of fellow fans I'd like to meet and hang out with. The fans I *really* click with all live in far removed places with strange and wonderous names. No fair! What, should I move east?

I'll get with you on the room offer later, but I have to ask this question. Does being male at a SW con mean my wings are already clipped? Or just how far east do I have to go?

Quick hello-how-and-where-you-beens to Sue Zahn, Catriona Campbell, Veronica Wilson, Cheryl DeLuca, Jon Snyder, Lynda Boyce, and my bestest friend on the planet, Deana Marie Julian. Okay, so that last one isn't a participating SW fan. Oh, and hi to Pia Rasmussen and Lorrie Cherry. ((Ed: Jon Snyder, Lynda Boyce, Deana Marie Julian, Pia Rasmussen and Lorrie Cherry don't subscribe to *SE* — but we'd sure love to see them all join us! How's about working on them, Brian?))

See you guys in the spring, and here's one for you. If it looks like a fish, smells like a fish, and tastes like a fish ... it might be prudent to get a second opinion. Peace.



THE COMPUTER ATE MY LOC!

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February 17, 1995

Hey, Teach! The computer ate my homework! Gulped my LoC for SE40 right down and didn't even burp so's anyone could notice. Honest. Cheree, can my article count as my continuous appearance in *SE* (since #4, at least)? ((Ed: You bet, Maggie! It was completely my fault that your LoC got zapped from the last issue anyway, so technically you had a LoC in, even though it didn't make it to print!))

Anywho, I guess I'll just combine letters to relieve everyone from having to read too many pages of my ramblings. First, I'd like to compliment everyone on their letters in SE39 and 40. Many potentially difficult subjects were addressed and handled with great finesse! This bodes well for the depth and diversion of our future SW fannish forums. Congratulations, all!

Also, my thanks to everyone for taking my CML/JAM fannish comparison so generously. As everyone noted, we're all a little bit of each and it's all nothing more than a way to look at things from a different angle.

I'm grateful for the thoughtful response to the articles on *Jundland Wastes* as well. It's very difficult to address issues that one was personally involved in — and I'll be curious to see the reaction to Part II, since it includes a more intense level of involvement for me. Even reading it a few years after I wrote it, which was ten years and more after all the controversy happened, the old emotions are still there, waiting to catch fire. I guess all a person can do is try to make clear when she is editorializing; I hope I have done so.

A general throw-out: What if what Han smuggled wasn't either drugs or high-tariffed supplies? Let's think 90s instead of 60s and play with the idea that Han smuggled pirated *merchandise*, or, better yet, pure *intellectual property*, like industrial prototypes and software code? This sort of stuff is happening today all over the world (especially in China) and is a much greyer area of ethics, depending on local social attitudes toward creative properties/rights. Monetarily, the stakes are just as high, and planetary governments could be just as ruthless regarding the losing, or getting, of such data/material.

Second general throw-out: Locally, I'm hearing a growing impatience with the "fragile" Lukes showing up in stories. The argument against these very sensitive, innocent portrayals is that the Luke we saw within the first

third of ANH was not devastated by the sight, just a few yards away, of his "parents'" flesh and bones still sizzling from an unfortunate bar-b-que. Hamill has said that he thought Luke should react violently, but Lucas told him, no, Luke wouldn't do that. Furthermore, he seems to take to the reality of killing with little outward emotion. Han and Leia might be expected to be inured to the sight of falling bodies; are we going to posit a violent lifetime on Tatooine to explain Luke? Anyone interested in discussing this line of thought?

To the letters...

Debbie Kittle: Good point that Owen might not want to be reminded of Luke's father by being called Dad himself. Also, the local society could well be one in which fatherhood is not as important as unclehood. There have been a number of earthly societies in which a boy's father is an inconsequential part of his upbringing, but his mother's brother is Very Important Indeed. Luke's obsession with his father could be seen as very strange by a social group that expects his mother's brother to raise him (and a good story could be written using Luke's obsession as a marker of his native Force talent, vis à vis the Forceful bond he might have with Anakin/Vader, however deeply buried it might be. Owen could be well aware of this, which is why he keeps the boy from Kenobi. And a parallel could be drawn with Leia's fierce interest in politics at a young age ... with similar discomfort in that for her adopted parents.)

A. G. Steyn: I remember thinking that Han must have fallen when the doors closed, but mostly have been distracted by the change in that scene from the first times I saw it (I'm one of the folks who saw the "Close the blast doors/Open the blast doors" sequence).

As for the comments on the possible social life of Alliance forces, I'd like to add that although we are more familiar with the stark, Bismarkian models of recent vintage, there have been many varieties of fighting armies in Terran history — armies that travelled with wives and children, as well as armies that provided their own "comfort ladies," through force or passive acquisition. With the way starships move around in the SW universe, there could be "camp-following family ships" available for R&R. Or pilots who sign on for set periods, could return home for part of the year (American Revolution model).

Tim Blaes: Yes, the better questions is whether fanlit actually work as therapy. (Sometimes it works too well and we lose really good writers as they move to the next step of their development.) I know I can certainly read back through my own work and track the development of ideas and responses that affected my life years ago. And, of course, mere play is a very proper application of writing therapy!

As for Jedi overuse of the Force, I'm of the opinion that

Jedi who get caught up in their powers, or who cling to adolescent bedazzlement by their powers, don't really last that long. I've always imagined a teacher at a Jedi school — standing back from the offending student, or what's left of the student — one hip cocked, one arm akimbo while the other hand taps a saber against a thigh, an almost irritated look on the face and a sigh in the voice as the words intone, "Lose more Jedi that way."

Jennifer Moore: Pro developments in the SW universe are going to be a problem whether or not anyone is prejudiced against the pro novels. For a fan like me, the pro books are just cheaper-than-fanzine alternative fanlit. The only developments/characterizations/plottings that I feel I should be expected to know are what's on the screen.

(Godsheknows, it's impossible enough to find people who agree on what happened in the movies, even when they were sitting, watching, at the same theater, the very same showing!)

If I start reading fanlit that assumes knowledge of those pro developments, I'm going to be irritated unless the story states up front that it is based on the movies *and* a particular pro novel. And yet, a person cannot deny that the new wave of fans are full of people that consider the novels as much SW as the movies. Who's to say who's more accurate in their assessment? We've moved into a new world of SW fandom the last few years, just like Trek has. There's not going to be as much common ground as before.

Nora Mayers: From talking with the "mundane" SW fans that I've encountered, least the ones in my office, I'm inclined to believe that many readers of the SW books carry the character presentations of ANH forward into the next two movies, which might explain a pro author's inclination to present Han in ANH fashion, even after ROTJ. When I get a chance to talk about fannish explorations of the universe (which isn't often, certainly!), and I bring up various fannish discussions on the characters, I tend to get a "aren't you all taking this a bit too seriously?" response.

And, she said carefully, remember that we "intense types" differ strongly among ourselves as to the definition and quality of Han's changes through the movies. There are many among us who prefer the ANH Han and might welcome an author who disregards the changes in the man through TESB and ROTJ.

That said, I'm going to agree with the SE40 suggestion that we quit with all the universal *It's awful/terrible/rotten* declarations. Just saying "I *hated* it" proves nothing to anybody but yourself and severely limits discussion. As another LoC said, those comments are insulting to both the efforts of another writer and the sensibilities of those who enjoyed the story. Instead, if we really dislike a story, we should describe it as our personal reaction and *explain why*, just as Nora did with the *Courtship* book.