

VIDEO

Spaced-out over 'Star Wars'

Fans confused by ads
for re-release on video

By Beth Pinsker

Staff Critic of The Dallas Morning News

Visions of Darth Vader are haunting American highways — but don't be misled by the billboards touting the re-release of the *Star Wars* movies. You won't be able to see the restored films in theaters — not until 1997, at least.

Yoda & Co.'s new ad blitz — via billboard, TV and magazines — is selling new, digitally remastered videos of *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, which hit video stores Tuesday.

The billboards in question sport close-ups of *Star Wars* luminaries with little more than a

Star Wars Trilogy logo, the release date and a World Wide Web address (<http://www.tcfhe.com/starwars>).

And that has caused confusion among some *Star Wars* fans who want to head to the multiplex to see the 1977 blockbuster and its sequels.

"My initial impression was that they were doing one-day-only re-release at local theaters," says fan Ken Leiter, a Dallas legal investigator who was disappointed when he found out the promotion was for tapes only. (Officials at Fox-Video, which is distributing the trilogy tapes, would not comment.)

The videos sell for \$12.95 to \$19.98 each, with the trilogy gift priced at \$29.95 to \$49.98. The new cassettes are the first to

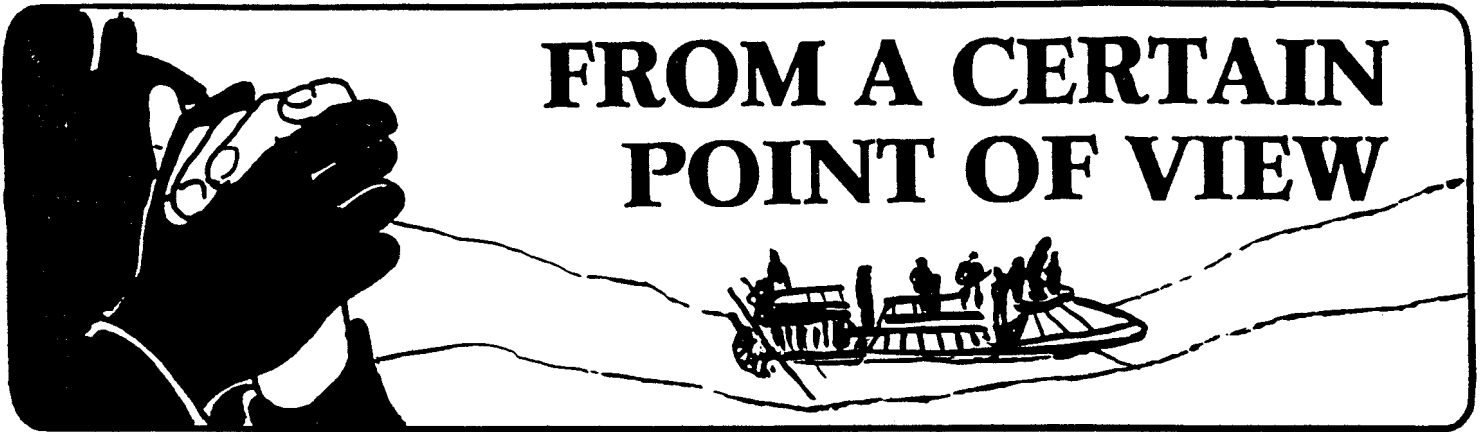
feature digital THX mastering, a high-quality sound and video duplication system that is employed by movie theaters and laser discs.

The trilogy will be available until Jan. 31, 1996, when FoxVideo plans to pull at least the first installment from the market.

Series creator George Lucas is working on a director's cut for theatrical release to celebrate the film's 20th anniversary in 1997. The new film will contain special effects and scenes that were omitted from the original.

Mr. Lucas is also writing screenplays for a prequel trilogy to concentrate on Darth Vader's development as a supervillain. Those films have not yet been scheduled.





FROM A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

Year of the Jedi

M. J. Mink
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Hi everybody. I'm writing this in August and thinking about all of you sweltering in the summer, but when the next SE's published, you'll probably be complaining about snow and cold. If you want consistency, come here. It rains. All the time.

Jacqueline: Maybe *we're* the only ones who believe Luke's Jedi status is important. Your comments about the Jedi being smug and ripe for betrayal, combined with Kenobi's haughty description of the lightsaber as "an elegant weapon", lay foundation for the belief held by some that Anakin felt himself to be a savior of sorts, determined to end what he saw as an arrogant, corrupt, failed Jedi organization. Maybe they didn't live up to his high standards and, in his disillusionment, he set out either to kill or "reprogram" them.

"Spice" as the brand name of a computer chip? Hmm. Either that or aftershave was outlawed, and Han was smuggling cannisters of Old Spice to needy desert hermits.

Re Yoda and the Emperor: Perhaps Yoda only existed on Dagobah. Since it seems no one believed in its existence, maybe the planet is unreal or on another plane of reality. In which case, Palpatine wouldn't have to worry about Yoda — he'd be locked in a cage with Dagobah as his zoo.

Mrs. Skywalker: We don't even know if the woman Leia described was her and Luke's mother. She could have been describing her nanny who ran off with the fleet

manager when Leia was three.

Mary Jo: So you think some fans resent Leia because she's smart, beautiful, rich, powerful, brave, has handsome heroes panting after her, and only weighs 20 lbs?? Nah. Not possible. But all those attributes do make her difficult to relate to!

And what is this about "flogging a dead tauntaun"? Sounds like something you do after you've slipped someone fifty credits in a dark alley and followed him into a backstreet corral.

Debbie and Cheryl: I hope Vader's boudoir display is in next year's doll show!

Matthew: You raised a lot of interesting points re Luke and the Jedi. I've always had a problem with the time span between ESB and ROTJ. Luke changed beyond what could happen in a few months. I'd like to know how he dealt with the Alliance during that time. He was out of uniform by ROTJ, evidently having resigned his commission, yet he was hanging around and participating in missions. With more Forceful help than he's shown before, he quite efficiently dispatched all the beings at Jabba's place, so he was a capable fighting machine even though he wasn't lending that talent to the Alliance on a full-time basis. If we can judge by his spacey attitudes, he was deeply into the Force. Yet when he saw Yoda and Kenobi on Dagobah, it was evident they had not appeared to him since ESB. So how did he receive his knowledge and upgrade his Force-skills so suddenly? A lucky stab in the dark while meditating, or was he communing with Daddy between ESB and ROTJ? If the latter were true, then Luke's assertion that he felt the good in Vader and Vader's remark, "So, you have finally accepted the truth" would make more sense — if they'd been in contact after

ESB and Luke had consistently refused to accept Vader's true identity.

As for "May the Force be with you" — maybe it's the galactic equivalent of "Have a nice day". :)

Speaking of Jedi (as I have been too much, I see) I'm beginning to wonder why the pro-novel Leia wants her kids trained as Jedi. Big deal. Luke's the only example, and the pro-novel Luke is doing very little with his talents. Han is right when he says that Jedi are more trouble than they're worth and that he always has to rescue Luke. Looks to me like the three brats should be trained to follow in their father's and mother's footsteps, not Uncle Luke's.

Re Episode One: With all the questions and ideas that this group comes up with, I'm looking forward to the discussions that arise after the release of One. What happens between One and ANH? That will produce a whole new wave of stories. And, while many people worry about being disappointed by the first trilogy, there's also the possibility that we may love the story and characters and wonder how we ever got along without them.

Maggie: When I say Adam Cartright (or any of those beauties) was bad, I don't mean *bad* bad, I mean dangerous bad, hot bad, bedroom eyes and black leather bad. Adam's all-black ensemble warped me for life — guess that's why I love Vader and Dark Lukes. Like you, Adam's (or his real-life equivalent's) approval was important to me; that man had brains *and* common sense, he wasn't just another pretty bad boy.

Your ideas about the Jedi are interesting. From the way you described it, the galaxy in general would see the Jedi, while not commonplace, as just another uninteresting phenomena from another part of the galaxy. And if someone actually *saw* a Jedi — so what? They look like everyone else. Perhaps some people didn't believe in Jedi at all, so it was meaningless when they were massacred. Others may have thought they got what they deserved. There's also the jealousy aspect as Mary Jo described about Leia. Who wants a bunch of magical people around who do things that you can't?

Why is Minky talking so much about Jedi? What, you didn't know this was the Year of the Jedi? Too late, it's almost over now!

Marlene: Re the family-less Luke, there are valid arguments either way. I don't think, though, that Luke's life would be empty and bitter without a family. Having a family is no guarantee of "joy, humor, compassion, laughter, and balance"; indeed, a great many people find that their families provide just the opposite. There seems to be a fallacy in this world that says having a family ensures happiness, while being alone dooms one to a life of loneliness and unfulfillment. Not true. Luke, like many people, may be perfectly content to be alone — he's able to

entertain himself and isn't dependent on others to provide him with reasons to exist. And look at how many workaholics virtually abandon their families for their jobs. Luke's "job" as Jedi Master has the potential to eat up his time; I wouldn't envy the woman who married the Only Jedi Master in the Galaxy. "Dammit, Shirley, on the rare occasions Luke bothers to come home, he has fifty students over for a barbeque, then they sit at his feet while he pontificates! I'm fed up with it!"

As for Luke being sent to Tatooine: Can you imagine him raised as a Prince of Alderaan? Even as a farmer, he was cocky — as a prince, he would have been impossibly arrogant. (But gorgeous in silks and satins.)

Here's another possibility why Beru and Owen accepted the task of raising Vader's child: Obi-Wan in his infinite wisdom (which we saw displayed several times) lied to them about the dangers. Or about the father's identity. When Owen and Beru discussed "he's got too much of his father in him" maybe they *weren't* talking about Vader — maybe they were referring to the man they'd been told about — a wild kid who ran away from his responsibilities and became a navigator on a spice freighter!

Unlike you (and most people) I enjoyed the Luke parts in *The Crystal Star*. He was so out of control and off-the-wall, so jealous and emotional, so mystical and tranced, so suicidal and depressed and Dark — YES!!! (Sorry. If I lose self-control again, whip me. Hard.) Okay, maybe its storyline and characterization don't fit in with any of the other pro novels, but it does have a certain *je ne sais quack* all its own, don't you think?

Amanda: Don't worry about your daughter. Bad boys won't crimp her romantic future — *au contraire*. But they do make good boys look dull in comparison. (Which is why "my" Luke isn't a good boy.)

And for anybody who didn't hear: Yes, I went to the very small Dark Horse convention here in Portland in August; yes, Mark spent most of the day there; yes, he signed autographs and posed with people for pictures; yes, he looked good (and *bad* in black leather...).

Bye.



MWC highlights

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Yo and salutations, Swarsies (or is that Swarsers?) --

Just a short missive jotted in my copious free time (HAAA!). Yeah, BOY, Media West was good last year! A few highlights for me were Becky Carey's wonderful FX type lighting in the cantina, Sue Zahn's musical selections at the dance, Cypher's Corellian Nerd, the Dead Bothans' impromptu "Snoopy" dance, the chaos poker game that rapidly turned into a "who can build the biggest house of cards" competition (we take our gambling seriously), Barb Anderson's bar twin costume, Wanda Lybarger's otherworldly avian, Carolyn Golledge's moniker ("Major Calamity"), Liz Sharpe's interesting non-sequiturs (and other assorted and inspired silliness of which only the Dead Head Bothan is capable), the Star Awards (congratulations to all Winners and Honorable Mentionees!!). There was just so much that I could go on and on, but I'll spare you. Most of you were there, anyway! It was wonderful, though, as Media West always tends to be. The special comradery that exists among SW fans is great, and — as Barbara mentioned — the boundaries are coming down. It no longer matters if we're Luke fans, Chewie fans, Han fans, or whatever. We're *Star Wars* fans, and we're friends, and that's what counts!

First off, special congrats to Carolyn Golledge, who has sold her second story to West End Games (way to go, Calam!). The nice thing about this victory in Major Calamity's life is that she didn't keep it to herself, but spread the joy (and information on how to submit to West End Games!) to other SW fans whom she felt had the capacity to write (and write *well*) for the professional SW market. That's just the kind of Good Time Rebel and Dead Bothan she is! I know that there are very rigid constraints on what and how to write for the SW novels, but those restraints are not as severe when it comes to creating your own characters and situations for West End Games. Yes, there are definite boundaries, but the wide open spaces in between are so broad, and there's so much room for original creation, that it hardly seems there are any constraints at all. As Carolyn mentioned in her letter, the editor of the *Star Wars Adventure Journal* is a SW fan, himself, and I get the impression he gets a hoot out of the fannish submissions. Maker knows, there's so much talent out there in SW fandom that it's wonderful to have such a great opportunity to write "officially" and still create your own characters and situations. And writing for 'zines is still a viable option for those of us who love writing the

original characters, too. The best of both worlds! Those of us who can and do write, and who have complained that the pro novels and other material don't live up to the standards we've come to appreciate in really good fanfic (I have done my share of complaining, Lord knows!) should consider this avenue as a way to change the situation. In any case, thank you Carolyn, for your generosity and for always remembering your friends. You're good people!

Sorry to make this so brief — a longer letter next issue! In the meantime, keep well, keep happy, and fly as casually as life will allow.

Elegant

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Aug. 14, 1995

As always, it was a genuine thrill to discover SE #42 among the bills. You can never know how much relief you give to this fandom-starved Missourian, Cheree. I really enjoyed the article "Seven Deadly Sins of Fandom" by Susan M. Garrett and look forward to future installments. Your own additions were especially appropriate, IMO. I also appreciate the list of STAR aWARDs winners. Even though I was present, the whole event is so wonderful, my leaky memory tends to fade. It's nice to have a proper list of the lucky. Laura Virgil's article was very nice and, of course, I wish her success in her ambition. I will say, I miss her fabulous art, however.

Jacqueline Taero: In your reply to MJ Mink re the Alliance not calling attention to Luke's Jedi status, I have to add my voice to that of others in agreeing that no one considered him a Jedi immediately. Also, Luke may have been too unsure of himself in the beginning to welcome such attention. Later, it could have proved too dangerous for both him and the Alliance. I doubt many knew of his talents within the Force anyway. I do wholeheartedly agree that had the original Jedi nurtured a little "healthy paranoia", as you said, they might not have been so easily annihilated.

As for Ben's choice of the word "elegant" for the lightsaber, I think it had a more romantic ring to it. Although not nearly as much time has passed in the SW galaxy, look at the popularity of Renaissance fairs today. Yet, as I seem to recall, those were not exactly fantastic times for those living them. Tatooine being a rimworld, backwater sort of place probably accounts for the reactions we see in Luke as well.

I don't believe Yoda knew Obi-Wan was training

Anakin. Yoda may be quite powerful, but I don't believe he was omnipotent and, presumably, there were other Jedi training pupils at that time, not just Obi-Wan.

As for your questions concerning Tarkin, the Death Star, and Vader, have you read Veronica Wilson's story "Balance of Power" in *Tremor* #8? If not, I highly recommend it. I think it does an outstanding job of explaining the relationships involved.

A. G. Steyn: Please accept my sincere best wishes for you and your family during your father's illness. I am so sorry. If you ever need a shoulder to lean on, please write. I've been there and I understand the need for support. I love your SE letters and your writing and hope you can find a measure of comfort in knowing others care about you. You have my address.

Mary Jo Fox: I wanted to add my two cents worth on your comments re the STAR aWARDs. Judy has given every writer, artist, poet and publisher out there a wonderful gift by working so hard on the awards. It infuriates me when I hear even a hint of discouragement or sour grapes. Yes, I've been *very* fortunate to have won, but even if I had not, I would find the award well worth working toward earning. Judy is one of the least biased, most fair-minded people I've ever had the good fates to meet and her efforts should receive a resounding ovation from *every* SW fan. More voters are needed, but I won't preach to the believers I know are in SE. I just wanted to say "Hear! Hear!" to your remarks.

Barbara Anderson: Congratulations on your new job title. I'm sure it was well-earned. I loved your thoughtful description of your "epiphany". Fabulous. Would that all saw your vision and shared in your new enjoyment.

One personal note, are you ready to feed me to the sarlaac yet for getting a certain person to contact you at last? :)

Louise Turner: Hey, I like *Babylon 5* myself and am glad you are so enjoying it, but my heart will always belong to SW. I will admit that you scared me with the start of your letter, but I'm relieved to see that we are "stuck" with you yet.

Carolyn Golledge: Please forgive me for not congratulating you sooner on your leap to pro. My brain has been more than a little befuddled of late, which I know you'll understand. But your achievement is wonderful and my happiness for you is sincere, albeit late.

Have to agree with you about the Rebel leaders in the Blaster Battle. Hi, Mark and Melea!

Thanks also for your comment on my STAR aWARDs win. It was certainly *the* highlight of this con for me.

Donna Frayser: First, welcome to the written pages of SE, even if you have been a longtime reader. Secondly, ARGHH!!!! You didn't call me?! I am hereby giving notice to others out there as well as to you, never, never

think that I wouldn't welcome a call from a fellow SW fan. Just say, "Hi, I'm a SW and SE fan" and you can move in — at least for a time. It gets mighty lonely in the outlands of the midwest, folks. Why do you think I grow greener every time I read of yet another fun-filled Dead Bothan gathering? So, if you are ever in my neck of the woods again, call, call, call. I'm in the book.

Do try to attend MWC soon, too. Every single SW fan out there should make the Lansing mind trip at least once!

Marlene Karkoska: Welcome back. It's nice to see a SW returnee, though I am too new to remember you, I'm afraid. And never refer to yourself as "only a consumer". While I personally love conversing with other writers, artists and publishers, hearing from a fan who isn't into these aspects of fandom is still welcome and beneficial. Most of us get contributor copies of the zines we're in, so hearing from someone who has shelled out hard-earned cash for our efforts is more than wonderful.

I want to thank you for your kind compliment on my writing and, yes, I believe I am the only writer who incorporates a sterile Luke into *my* galaxy, so I plead guilty. The fun of SW is agreeing to disagree, however. *My* Luke doesn't have to be yours and vice versa. A well-written story should be enjoyed even when the characters aren't 100% the reader's versions. Don't you agree? I wrote "The Emperor's Revenge" years ago because I was a little tired of the then popular and overly saccharine stories involving Luke and family. Had the stories been more than thinly disguised Mary Sue's, I might never have been so inclined, but I was in danger of developing diabetes from some of that stuff!

I am not anti-family. I've been married nearly 26 years and have two grown sons of my own. However, I will take umbrage that for Luke to have "personal happiness" requires him to marry and procreate! I have many friends who have never married and still have a full, happy life. The lack of a family does not deprive them of "joy, humor, compassion, laughter and balance", as you imply. I think you do an injustice to all singles who choose to remain so — sterile or otherwise, real or fictional.

As for my opinion of why Owen and Beru were willing to foster Luke, I do believe that perhaps Beru had lost a baby or two and could not conceive her own, yet still hungered for a child and that it was for this reason that Owen agreed. I distinctly got the feeling he would not have done it merely for Ben since their relationship seems strained at best.

Like you, I dearly wish Lucas had opted to do a sequel rather than a prequel, so your absence may not be the only reason behind your preference. I just feel that no matter how well-made the film is, and while it may answer some of fandom's most lingering questions (what *is* her name?), it cannot help but be somewhat anti-climactic. My real

fear is that a sequel will never get made, though that allows fanfic writers free rein, I suppose.

Thanks to all who commented on *I Don't Care What You Smell*. It did turn out nicely, didn't it? Take a bow, Judy!

One last confession before I go. I recently caught the trilogy on cable and for the first time in more viewings than I can accurately remember, I saw something I'd missed. How many others are aware of C-3PO's mobile dent at the end of ANH? Am I the only narrow viewer who has missed this all these years?

That'd better be it or Cheree will be after me. Hello to everyone I missed and maybe I'll catch you next issue. Until then, I wish everyone a totally awesome autumn and peace of mind.

P.S. I saw this in a movie and wanted to share it. It's supposed to be a Japanese prayer, according to the film.

"There can be no sickness like hate, no gift like health, no faith like trust, no joy like peace."

Says it all. MTFBWYA!

Great to Be Back

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August 18, 1995

Thank you to all for the messages of "welcome back" to the pages of SE. Saying it again, it is great to be back! And the most recent issue arrived at virtually the perfect time: the second of my two summer courses was finishing and I've about two weeks of completely free time before school starts up again. As a background note, I've recently finished my tenth full year of teaching high school business courses and am hard at work on a second degree/teacher certification program to allow me to teach mathematics.

Pro-novels: Hambly's *Children of the Jedi* sounds well worth the investment (\$ and time), so I'll put it on my to-be-read list. Hambly is a fine author. I enjoyed her *Beauty & the Beast* novelizations and *Dragonsbane*, and was torn as to whether to take a risk with her SW novel.

Jacqueline Taero: Great LoC! So many things you brought up sparked ideas.

Jedi training in the old days: You're right that my idea of training in small, hidden cells doesn't really jive with the Order being well known, established, and public. They had to have been very public and visible, for reasons you pointed out. Might there still have been isolated, hermit-like masters (e.g. Yoda) who were semi-retired or taught only on a one-to-one basis out of preference? [This line of

discussion sprung from why Darth and the Emperor did not know of Yoda's location.]

Elegance of a lightsaber: perhaps OWK meant elegant in the sense of the skills needed to properly wield it? Anyone can pull the trigger of a blaster, but there's an artistry to a sword duel. I'm not saying there are no skills needed for a blaster/firearm, but in our culture swordsmanship has often been seen as far more noble, even romantic, than those skills necessary for firearms. When we pare away that aura, though, all weapons are essentially barbaric. It's the myths we cloud them in that carry any sense of elegance.

RE your Yoda/Anakin/OWK series of questions: If OWK was an experienced, capable Jedi, why should Yoda stop him from training Anakin? Kenobi wasn't entirely incompetent. He was able to awaken Luke's Force potential in their brief time together, allowing Luke to destroy the Death Star and save the rebellion.

Was Anakin destined to go bad or was his fall due to Kenobi's inept teaching? Was the flaw in Anakin or in the teaching? One of my early stories assigns the credit to his fall to the evil of Palpatine, painting Anakin as having a tragic flaw of hubris that allowed the Dark Side to win him over. Now going back to your series of questions, do you (anyone) think Yoda or any other Jedi knew Anakin would fall to the Dark Side? This would require their using Force talent to see into the future. If they did see his path heading toward the Dark, what would they do? Forbid him to be taught about the Force or carry on with his Force training to try to guide him to the Light? Also it must be considered how accurate is the forward seeing talent? Can events be altered, rendering the prediction wrong?

This might be a major moral dilemma for Jedi masters. If they see a student headed toward the Dark path, I don't think they can just kick the student out of the academy. Left without guidance, there may be an even greater potential for disaster than if they continued the training. Could this have been Anakin's story? He was ousted from the academy when it was deemed he was too susceptible to Dark side tendencies, and Kenobi tried to save his friend from the fate predicted by the lofty masters. Or what if the Order had not been this utopian brotherhood many of us imagine ... what if Dark tendencies were seen in young Anakin, and he was sentenced to death to rid the galaxy of a potential Dark Sider? His friend Kenobi would surely (unwisely?) try to rescue him from the Jedi (who are all goody-goody on the outside, but rotten at the core), and then train him to use the Force from the Light side, but ultimately fails and Anakin falls just as the Jedi predicted.

This is just a stream of what ifs ... and reason why I want to see the prequel trilogy.

Long-term effects of Alderaan's destruction on the psyche of children of that time: I'd imagine it'd be similar

to that of the children who grew up in our society under the shadow of the mushroom cloud. On a galactic scale, there would be vast differences depending on what world you're from. If your planet is a main line Imperial stronghold, there'd be a sense of security. Your world is loyal, contributing, and valuable. You'd be secure in your value to the Empire, not fearful that the government would turn around and blast you out of existence. But if you're a citizen of a conquered world, a hostile colony under the Imperial heel, you might be pushed toward open rebellion on the basis of the initial fear, but followed quickly by the rebel success in destroying the Empire's terror weapon.

I imagine the Empire made no secret of their constructing an ultimate terror weapon. It was probably planned to be used to let everyone know it did indeed work (like our atomic bombs), but only on a limited basis. What's the sense of building an Empire only to start blowing up your colonies? The Empire wanted obedience, and to accomplish this every reluctant colony had to have been warned what fate awaited them. When the rebels were able to so swiftly destroy this state-of-the-art battle station, I see the Empire suffering an inestimable blow at their ability to govern by terror.

RE: Tarkin, what was his role, level of power, et al? Perhaps the Death Star was his idea, and its failure leading Palpatine to re-enter active, hands on ruling of the Empire. If Tarkin was acting on his own initiative (assumed with the blessing of the Emperor), he may have had free reign in choosing targets for destruction. How did he get to this level of trust? Good question (like I said, Jacqueline, you had a *great* LoC). Was he under mind/Force control by Palpatine?

A.G. Steyn: RE: Jedi training. I think my comments earlier in this LoC answer your question about my "pockets of Light Siders" idea. Those musings back in my SE40 LoC don't really hold up to what we've seen established.

Has anyone seen the SW/ANH calendar at Hallmark? Gorgeous!

In re the upcoming rerelease of ANH, it sounds more and more like all that's being done is revamping the FX, rather than restoring footage originally cut. Thus, we'll probably not see those scenes of Luke with Biggs. DRAT! What LFL seems to be doing is more practice FX work to get up to speed for the next trilogy, rather than any real enhancement of ANH. I'd argue that while the FX are "primitive," compared to today's state-of-the-art, they are by no means undramatic. To me this seems to be a kowtowing to the perceived public demand for bigger, more glitzy visuals, rather than focusing on story and character elements.

Adding my 2¢ to the topic of early zine efforts ... while I never tried to edit, my early writing was all done on a *manual* Smith-Corona portable, with erasable paper.

Gack. While I've not graduated up to a real computer yet, I cannot imagine trying to do any sort of writing on anything less than the word processor (Brother WP-1400D) I now use.

Gerald Crotty: Thank you for the info on the intended, though never completed, plans for the Wampas. I remember that shot of 3PO tearing the sign off the panel (and now am wondering if I had heard of the scenes you mention, but had forgotten them over the years).

Why did Ben wait 3 years before sending Luke to Yoda? Maybe he thought it best to allow Luke a chance to grow and see some of the galaxy before sending him off to "boarding school?" I imagine OWK kept a close eye on Luke to be sure he didn't stray down any wrong paths, while allowing him some freedom to find his own way. After years under Owen's thumb, Luke surely needed to develop a sense of independence.

A longer UK version of TESB? ... There were *definitely* two mildly different versions of the film out in release during the summer of 1980 here in the US. Nothing earth shattering (Alderaan shattering?), just a line of dialog or so and some FX sequences. Specifically: a long shot of Han and Leia watching Luke's bacta fluid treatment, a longer series of ship fly-bys of the medical frigate, and Lando's line "When we find Jabba the Hutt and that bounty hunter, we'll contact you." Nothing that materially changed the film, but immediately noticeable to a pair of rabid fans who were seeing a "different" version of the film while on a week's vacation in another state (thus away from our regular theater for the first time after a dozen or so viewings). We followed this up by returning to our regular haunt, as well as another local theater, and determined there were indeed different prints out. Why, I've never found out.

Donna Frayser: On Brits cast as Imperials, it must have been due largely to the filming location, but also their nationality plays into their role. Who better to convey the stereotype of imperial than the British? Meanwhile, note the actors who played rebels either were American (mostly) or downplayed foreign accents or adopted American dialects. The most obvious example was the very Texas sounding (to my ears) Red Leader, an obvious cashing in on the typical fighter jock stereotype. I am assuming (a dangerous word) many/all of these minor actors were Brits, but have no back-up info to prove any of this, so someone may have knowledge I don't and will blow that last paragraph out of the water.

Marlene Karkoska: On why Owen and Beru were willing to foster Luke. I've a story ("Changeling," in Cheree's *A Tremor in the Force* #4) that matches one of your scenarios: Beru had recently lost a child in childbirth and was very distraught. Owen and Obi-Wan I portrayed as not being close, but Owen agrees to take on the immense

risks involved in fostering the son of Skywalker only out of his love for Beru.

Amanda Palumbo: Why was OWK more involved with Anakin's training than Yoda seemed to be with Luke's? Perhaps OW's and Anakin's closeness as friends, in age, and species lead toward a tighter bond.

Why is Yoda so old? In absence of any firm data, I've always assumed it was natural for his species, but we cannot be sure that's so. Maybe he's Gollum-like, stretched by the Force to an unnatural age. Has Yoda clung to the Force out of a fear of death? For reasons of unfinished business (the Other)?

Changing to a different fandom for a moment, I thoroughly enjoyed all of *ST: VOYAGER*'s first season, and am looking forward to season two. By the by, if anyone knows of a zine dedicated to the series, I've a vignette I'm trying to find a home for. Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Well, I'm at the end of this LoC. Thanks for all the terrific ideas, gang. Wish the Red Sox luck (at the moment, they are 10½ games ahead of the Yankees in the AL East race — that's baseball, for the non-US SEers).

Follow the Force...

Face to Face with a Lightsaber

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Taero: Elegant weapon. Yes! You don't hide behind something while wielding a lightsaber. You don't spray your enemies with random fire, killing innocent bystanders. You don't shoot them under the table. It won't work with a flick of your trigger finger. You can't kill with it very well even when you're wounded, because it hurts to move. It's not enough to aim from a distance, you have to go close, offer your own body to be damaged, you kill person-to-person, your victim is not just a target far away, your victim is close enough to have a face, look you in the eye. There are no compromises with a lightsaber: you know you are about to kill someone, or be killed, you fight while maintaining eye-contact, you'll remember his face for the rest of your life. And if he is also a fighter, you're duelling for your very existence. It's a whole-body dance, face to face, man to man (no, I am not going to add woman to woman to be PC). It is an elegant weapon, a deadly waltz to the humming vibrations of the lightblade ... Stop me, I could continue this until morning. Re: reality gap. Once again, I remember Bib Fortuna saying: "Rather bargain than fight, he is no Jedi" — people knew about the Jedi, young and old, as they know about the French

Foreign Legion.

Schuller: I feel the same about the Luke/Leia scene, but you know that by now, see last issue of SE...

Fox: Carolyn bandaged her Han doll? I did. Hah! I offered her a choice of the bleeding Han and the bandaged Han two years back, and she picked the bandaged one. That woman has a heart of gold hidden under her whip collection.

Kittle: One of these days, we'll have to write a major article about how those doll exhibits are done. Everything is in the details.

Anderson: Go ahead, be maudlin! Yes, MWC is the true spirit of fandom, and this last one really had the loving spirit, in the Cantina. We were all children of the same God. It was warm and fuzzy and wonderful. Those who feel any kind of animosity toward BNFs or the handful of perverted Dirty-sider Force users, should come to MWC to understand that all can find room in the SW nest. Not only we like SW, we also like each other. You can really get to know a person once you've met him/her all dressed up in feathers and glitters and high boots or bug-masks and such and shared a wild dance in the cantina. You read her writings and think she is Vader personified, all arrogance and power, and when you finally meet, you might run into this petite, blushing girl or a funny-looking grandma of seven. And it is good ... we are not alone. Next year, again... And yes, Star Awards is getting larger, snazzier. I'd mention here about the VOTING — those who think it's all a conspiracy, grab a buck, buy a stamp and vote. Stamp out the old fogies who've been voting up to now, swamp Judy with votes for what you like and see who wins! Fandom is the only real democracy, use it!

Zahn: West End games, going pro. I tried. So far, no answer, I recently sent them the stuff. I don't find the gaming aspect restrictive, because I am a rabid RPG player on my computer, and the stats weren't entirely new to me. Besides it was fun to present some of my zine-story characters (the infamous Xalnodest) in a playable form. Still, they can reject it, or they might want to change it in ways I won't accept. Going into the pro field would give us a bit more say in what the mundanes receive. But yes, I do feel a tad guilty about it, and no, it's not as good as my fan work, although the *Adventure Journal* is not as bad as the Zahn books. And those guys at West End might really need writers who have a "feel" for SW. OK, wait until they reject my work and listen to me talking about them then!

Whitney: What if Leia had not been rescued from the first Death Star? The others escape, Kenobi would be still alive, because there would have been no need for him to confront Vader to cover their escape (Luke and Han would have been still safely waiting in that side room), they would've gone to Yavin and blown up the Death Star with

Leia on it! Whammm! An entirely new universe, in which Han would've gone back to his smuggling ways, no reward for rescue, Jabba would've made hamburgers of him, and Luke continued his Jedi training with Kenobi, as a very lonely boy.

Nowakowska: See above. Did Kenobi see Leia running with the boys, while he fought Vader? Was his sacrifice for her or for Luke? And why was his sacrifice needed at all? Was he Master enough to kill Vader there? Yes? No? Was Vader right saying *he* was the master now?

Turner: I don't think the Unionists and the Confederates would sit down for a beer after the battle. As a Hungarian living in Virginia (the world's most beautiful spot!), I still notice the Unionists and the Confederates drinking their beer at different tables... Real Americans. Hey, someone tell me if I am hallucinating! (*Ed: Anyone who thinks the Civil War ended at Appomatox Courthouse has never travelled through Confederate territory. As we unReconstructed Rebels say here in Texas, "Save yo' Confederate money, boys — the South gonna rise again!" And, by the way, all you Southern wannabe's, if you're going to use our Confederate National Contraction, y'all, please spell it correctly. It's not ya'll. Thanks!))*) But sure, there must be millions of Imp conscripts hating the whole setup, millions of kings and presidents on other planets playing along with the Empire and secretly hoping for a Rebel victory, or rulers having a few cousins and nieces in the Alliance and another dozen at the Emperor's court, to play off both sides.

Re: Letraset. I worked 12 years with the stuff at a printing company. Please send me those titles you want and I'll set them for you on the computer. I can't bear thinking of you rubbing those suckers. Even if you are only half-Scot. (I love Scots, my favorite shirt is a McGregor plaid and anyways, wha' wouldna fetch for Charlie? I would!)

Sharpe: What's with Han and the teddy bear? Have you missed *Frantic* in the movies? Thanks for noticing that we are dealing with model building and miniature costuming in the doll exhibit. Next year's theme will be Scum and Villainy, the dark side of the Galaxy... I think someone is already working on Vader's personal quarters, a miniature movie-set. (Don't I wish I had that idea!) There will be a cantina, perhaps Palpie's court, Jabba's lair.

Mink: Hey, you are playing Gabriel Knight! With Hamill's voice. How is Tim Curry as Gabriel? I can't see how his voice fits the face, that gaunt, fuzzy blond was closer to Luke to me than to Dr. Frankenfurter ... enlighten me, please. I haven't had the pleasure of hearing the voices, no CD for me yet.

Crotty: Yeah, Luke was a frontier farmer's boy, a gun-toting, varmint-shooting, hard-working guy, except, of course, he was also a Jedi, a Force-sensitive, and that had

to make his farmboy-life pretty messed up.

Blaes: There are tons of slash zines around, no TV evangelist ever mentioned any of them. And I do ask for age confirmation when I sell my zine. Kids under 18 usually don't have checkbooks, and there is something about a kid's letter that tips me off. But I don't get *Garbage* subscriptions from kids. Whoever asks for it, knows what it is. God forbid I'd sell it to a kid.

Karkoska: Welcome back, another Ellen Randolph fan! And a consumer! Consumers are gold, consumers are audience, consumers are good! We are working for you, we are here to please you, worship you, we want your input, your feedback, your subscriptions, your locs, God bless you, may your numbers multiply rapidly. As for Luke — let me offer you *Another Sky...* (The endless "Darkshine Rising" series) in which my Luke has 24 sons and half of a daughter; and about his relationship with females, I've got a bad feeling. (The women in his life). Hmm, I've seen a consumer and went into self-promoting mode...

Jedi Bashing

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Aug. 21, 1995

Well, last issue, my letter was one of the last to arrive; perhaps this issue, mine will be one of the first. School starts Sept. 6th, so I decided to get this LoC finished before things get too hectic.

Congratulations to all the winners of the 1994 STAR aWARDs! I admire the talent, creativity, and hard work of all SW artists, authors, and zine eds. Thanks for providing many hours of enjoyment for this reader.

I enjoyed seeing the pictures of MediaWest*Con 15 and reading the comments of people who participated. A penpal was kind enough to share her video of the Con, so for the first time, I almost feel like I was there. I will probably never attend MediaWest in person, so it was nice to have the opportunity to experience the Con vicariously.

Jacqueline Taero: You and I were pretty much in agreement with our answers to **Tina Bentrup's** TESB questions. However, you expressed those ideas far more succinctly, cleverly, and humorously than I did. Nicely done! You're right: We don't know what Mrs. Skywalker was like. She *could* have been "a treacherous viper who doublecrosses everyone in sight"! However, I guess I hope she was a nice, kind, gentle soul. I'd like to think that the Skywalker twins had at least one good and loving parent,

for their sakes. I guess it really doesn't make much difference though, as neither Luke nor Leia ever *really* knew her anyway, and they turned out well even if both parents were sort of "Darkside".

You asked some very provocative questions! I *do* think that Yoda probably knew that Obi-Wan was training Anakin. It's possible though, that Yoda did not foresee that Anakin would be lost to the Dark. Perhaps Yoda was too preoccupied with training his own students and didn't realize Anakin was in danger until Skywalker had already been taught too much, and in a flawed way by Kenobi. The damage was already done. Another possibility is that Yoda did warn Obi-Wan about Anakin's possible weakness and tried to dissuade him from tutoring young Skywalker, but Kenobi may have refused, arrogantly thinking he could "train Anakin just as well as Yoda". Kenobi's "Jedi Academy-For-One" may have been on a planet far away from Dagobah, and Yoda may have been powerless to even "Forcefully" stop Ben from half a galaxy or more away.

Yoda has always been a fascinating character to me. There didn't seem to be any other members of his race on Dagobah or anywhere else in the films. Yoda may have been the last of his kind, and he was ancient for his race, as Amanda Palumbo suggested. Maybe he *did* purposely delay "becoming one with the Force" until he not only had taught his last gifted student, but until Luke had returned to Dagobah after rescuing Han. It was a more mature, more skilled, calm, patient, contrite, and powerful Luke who returned to his Jedi Master. After assuring this "new Luke" that he required no further training, and encouraging him to share his knowledge and skills with others, Yoda seemed to peacefully leave this physical plane of existence, secure in the knowledge that there was a successor who would carry on the Jedi tradition. Perhaps he waited to "pass on the torch" to a new generation of Jedi until he was sure Luke was ready not only for the difficult confrontation ahead of him, but also for the awesome responsibility of resurrecting the Jedi Order.

You also asked why we see no evidence of a generational or cultural gap in Luke's reactions to what Kenobi says. I think Luke's seemingly strict, conservative, old-fashioned upbringing had something to do with that, and the "frontier", wilderness style of life on Tatooine had even more to do with it. People who endure common hardships and dangers in a harsh environment share a sort of kinship with one another. This would be especially true on a planet as sparsely populated as Tatooine seemed to be. Also, Luke didn't seem to fit in well with most of the other young people of Anchorhead. He was sort of ridiculed as a dreamer and misfit by his peers. Maybe he felt more comfortable and at ease with older people. Luke seemed to look upon Kenobi as a combination grandfather-figure, mentor, hero (Jedi Knight), rescuer (on Jundland Wastes),

and Friend-of-My-Father. Perhaps the last was the most powerful reason that Luke was willing to accept Ben's words.

I *do* think that the Empire probably would have announced the destruction of Alderaan in the hope that they could intimidate other worlds and other systems and keep them from joining the Alliance. However, I believe that Alderaan's destruction probably resulted in more gains for the Alliance than the Empire. I think a lot of people would have been outraged by this extraordinary crime and would have wanted to help defeat the Empire in order to prevent such an atrocity from ever occurring again. "Remember Alderaan"! may have been a rallying cry for quite a while. Of course the fact that the Death Star was pulverized by a certain x-wing pilot with a little help from his friends probably tempered any fear of other worlds that they might meet a similar fate. The Death Star was *not* indestructible!

As for Grand Moff Tarkin... How about this for an explanation: He is Palpatine's Force Blind Baby Brother and Tarkin *knows*, as does Big Brother, that Darth Vader has a son. However, Vader *doesn't* know this yet, and the Emperor wants to keep it that way, so old gruesome lets Little Brother play with his toys (Death Stars, etc.) so he doesn't "spill the beans" to Daddy Darth. Seriously, I have always wondered about this Emperor/Vader/Tarkin relationship myself. If Vader was the number 2 man in the Galaxy, why *would* he take orders from Tarkin?!

A. G. Steyn: I consider the pro fiction to be alternate universe. I know that people at Lucasfilm *are* trying to keep the novels and comics fairly consistent with one another (though there are *plenty* of inconsistencies!), but I don't think George Lucas has read much of the pro fiction (if any). I think he will eventually just do things his own way when/if he continues his saga.

Mary Jo Fox: I'm in full agreement with your comments about the pro fiction.

Barbara Anderson: Congratulations on your promotion! I liked your comments about the unity of fandom that you felt at MediaWest. I also like your attitude about *Star Wars*. I too am glad that "The Force is with us" again and we can find SW items in book stores, toy stores, Hallmark card shops, etc. (...and we *are* free to choose what we want to buy); and the fact that George *finally* seems ready to present us with new films is like icing on the cake.

Louise Turner: Please don't go away! I would hate to see SW lose such a talented writer as yourself. I really enjoy your Wedge stories! (Of course, I'm grateful that you usually manage to include Luke in your stories too.)

Z. P. Florian: I enjoyed your review of *Children of the Jedi*. You and I are pretty much in agreement about Hambly's book.

Gerald Crotty: You asked an interesting question about

the length of time between films. The time gap between TESB and ROTJ I find easiest to explain. First of all, Luke needed to recover physically, spiritually, and emotionally from his ordeal on Bespin. He needed to come to terms with everything. He probably also spent some time honing his Jedi skills, meditating, growing in the Force, building his saber, and planning Han's rescue attempt. It's also possible that a crisis situation developed for the Alliance, and neither Luke nor Leia could be spared for awhile. A novel is supposed to come out in 1996 (*Shadows of the Empire* I think it's called), that's supposed to take place between those 2 films. Maybe we will find out exactly why Leia and Luke couldn't go to rescue Han for about 6 months to a year after TESB.

The 3 year gap between ANH and TESB does seem to be an excessively long time for Ben to wait before sending Luke to Yoda! The only explanation that I can come up with (and it's pretty weak, I admit), is that perhaps Ben and Yoda decided that young Luke, who had been raised on the backwater rimworld of Tatooine needed some time to gain a more eclectic education (through Alliance tapes and lessons and real-life experiences on many different worlds), and to develop his other natural talents and strengths (like his leadership skills), and to gain some maturity) before he began formal Jedi training and became too powerful in the Force. Perhaps those 3 years were a sort of test to see if Luke was a strong, courageous, and stable enough individual to handle the power he might one day have, and be depended upon to use it wisely. Luke may have had many adventures and experiences between ANH and TESB in which his actions and decisions convinced Yoda and Ben that Luke *was* the young man they knew he had the potential to be, and was worthy of knighthood.

In reading the various answers to Maggie Nowakowska about Luke and his reaction to the deaths of his guardians, I noticed that many people, myself included, spoke about how dangerous Tatooine could be. Tim Blaes even said, "Luke has probably looked death in the face numerous times before we first saw him." Most folks seem to agree that Tatooine is a planet with a hostile environment and unfriendly, even dangerous inhabitants. This brings me to a question that I have wondered about for a long time: If the whole point of sending Luke away from his mother and hiding him on an isolated rimworld was to protect him and keep him safe (presumably so that one day he could be instrumental in the defeat of the Emperor and resurrect the Jedi Order), why did Kenobi choose a planet that was itself so dangerous that it could easily be the death of him?

M. J. Mink: I'm not sure that I agree with your statement that "Luke obviously wasn't up to it" in regards to destroying Palpatine. It's true that in that situation with Luke in enemy territory, unarmed, inexperienced, taken

completely by surprise by the Emperor's Force lightning, and unwilling to use the Darkside, the Kid had certainly bitten off more than he could chew alone. If it had been a more fair fight, we might have gotten a more accurate appraisal of Luke's capabilities of besting the Emperor. (He certainly did well enough in the duel with his father!) I see Palpatine's destruction as a Father/Son victory. If the old wizard hadn't been so preoccupied with blasting Luke into the hereafter with his Force bolts, Vader wouldn't have been able to catch the Emperor unawares and toss him down the shaft. Luke *was* right: The Emperor's overconfidence (in the allegiance of his Dark Lord) *was* his weakness! Old Palpie didn't expect that Luke's pleas for assistance in ridding the Galaxy of its greatest menace would be heeded by Vader. It was the combined presence and efforts of Skywalker Senior and Junior that led to the demise of the Emperor, in my opinion.

What I really wanted to "discuss" with you and everyone else is the Jedi. "Jedi Bashing" seems to be in vogue again. Just because they had the poor grace to be defeated and nearly driven to extinction by Vader and his followers, some people seem to feel that the Jedi must have been inherently evil and deserving of complete annihilation (or at the very least, that they serve no useful purpose and should be permitted to quietly die out with Luke Skywalker). I disagree and I'd like to try to defend the Jedi Order, if I may.

Ben Kenobi once said of the Jedi, "...For over a thousand generations, the Jedi Knights were the most powerful, most respected force in the Galaxy. They served as the Guardians and Guarantors of Peace and justice in the Old Republic." We don't just have Ben's word (which, admittedly, might be a bit prejudiced on the subject) that the Jedi were important to the Galaxy or that the Knights were basically good, honorable people. The Prologue to *Star Wars* states: "...under the wise rule of the Senate and the protection of the Jedi Knights, the Republic thrived and grew." The Jedi weren't nearly wiped out because they were corrupt either. They were victims who were deceived and massacred. As Ben said, "In many ways they were too good, too trusting for their own health." The Prologue affirms this: "Having exterminated through treachery and deception, the Jedi Knights, guardians of justice in the galaxy, the Imperial governors and bureaucrats prepared to institute a reign of terror among the disheartened worlds of the Galaxy."

Because the Jedi are nearly extinct during the middle trilogy, we don't really know or understand the nature of the working relationship between the Jedi and the Old Republic. We don't even meet "typical" Jedi Knights and don't see them performing "typical" Jedi tasks. Perhaps this is why some fans are so skeptical about the assertion that the Jedi played an important role in the success of the

Republic. I liked Maggie Nowakowska's argument about the Republic and I think it applies to the Jedi Order as well: If the Jedi Knights were the most respected force in the Galaxy for over a thousand generations, the Order must have been pretty effective. Any organization that can be successful for such a long period of time must have been basically sound and eminently worthy. It seems to me that the Jedi Order deserves to be rebuilt. I believe that even the skills of a few Jedi Knights would be beneficial to the New Republic. Even without knowing all of the abilities of Jedi Knights, I can see the Jedi serving as mediators, ambassadors, investigators, Truth Readers (important in trying to guarantee that justice is served), covert operations experts, members of a specialized police force, and, superior pilots, among other things. Also, a Jedi's ability to "See" possible future events and their "insights" and feelings about Present and future events could be invaluable.

I'm in complete agreement with Maggie's comments about opinions expressed about the Jedi in the films. The Alliance *does* seem to have a positive attitude about the Jedi. Matthew Whitney also points out that the Jedi slogan, "May the Force Be With You", was utilized by the Alliance which seems to affirm a positive attitude about the Order in general.

As for the Alliance's reaction to Luke in particular, Luke was just a *potential* Jedi Knight in ANH and during most of TESB. It's very likely that although the Alliance respected and valued Luke as a pilot and leader, they may have doubted that Luke would ever become a full-fledged, card-carrying Jedi Knight. With the death of Kenobi, it may have been assumed that there was no one left to further Skywalker's education in the Force. M.J. that may have been why (as far as we know) no one asked Luke about the Jedi (not that he would have known very much!) or commented about his lightsaber. They may have guessed that this was a hurtful topic for Luke. It was Skywalker's greatest desire to become a Jedi Knight, yet it was most likely an impossible goal. His fellow rebels didn't want to purposely cause Luke unhappiness, so they avoided painful topics.

After Luke's training on Dagobah (as Maggie N. says) Luke *is* accepted and left to go about his "Jedi business". The Alliance utilizes Skywalker's talents when he is able to be with them and accepts the necessity for his absences when he is not. For example, when Luke returned from Dagobah after the rescue of Han, he was allowed to attend a vital strategy session, no questions asked (even though he was late), and he was permitted to participate in an important top secret mission with no objections from anyone.

It's possible that the Jedi may always have worked with the Military with the understanding that they were free to

make their own decisions, within reason, Luke may have been free to "lend a helping hand" wherever he saw need and felt he would be an asset, with the complete agreement of the Alliance leaders. As Maggie says, allowing Luke to "be about his business" is a very positive attitude about the Jedi (...and about Luke, I think). I agree with Amanda Palumbo too: Alliance didn't have the "luxury of coddling" any of its members. Everyone's talents were sorely needed, and if that meant risking a Force-gifted individual, it was a necessary risk.

While members of the Alliance have pro-Jedi attitudes though, I'm sure that many other citizens of the Galaxy do not, due to Imperial propaganda. (I agree with Z. P. Florian here.) One of the major means of turning whole generations of citizens against the Jedi was probably through the Imperial schools. The children and young people were probably taught that the Jedi were monstrously evil and had committed all sorts of atrocities. The Old Republic was probably vilified as well. A penpal asked me recently if I felt that teachers would be willing to teach children blatant lies about history and about groups of people. My reply to her was that in my many years in education, most of the teachers that I had come into contact with were basically good and moral people who would not willingly teach lies or falsify history, especially when those falsehoods could cause irreparable harm to reputations or even physical danger to groups of people. However, I do think that the Emperor could have gotten the instructors that he needed to discredit the Jedi and the Republic in several ways: (1) Some would have done it if the price was right. (2) Some would have done it if their safety or the safety of their families was threatened. (3) The Emperor probably would have found a way ("Forcefully", if necessary), to brainwash other teachers and reindoctrinate them into truly believing that what they taught was the truth. Now, if the masses of children and young adults in the SW galaxy have been indoctrinated for nearly two decades to hate, fear, and distrust the Jedi (and the Republic), it's going to take a very long time to repair the damage to the reputation of both. Luke Skywalker's task in reestablishing the Jedi Knights is not going to be an easy one! A lot of attitudes are going to have to undergo a *lot* of change!

Well, I'm afraid I've "overstayed my welcome" again. It's *definitely* time to close! I'm sorry that I broke my promise to be brief, Cheree! I'm sure you wish that this "born-again" SW fan would have just stayed away!

Have a delightful Fall, everyone! I hope that by the time you read this, the Cleveland Indians will have won the World Series for the first time in my lifetime!



The Fragility of Republics

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August 18, 1995

Aha — LoC writing time again. This time I have to hurry to get the thing typed. Only 2 more weeks and I can finally take my yearly “time out” and haunt the realms of fellow STARWARriors Wathne, Treleaven and Wingo. (I'm going to regret this!)

Seven Deadly Sins... plus addendum by Cheree: Great. I look forward to the next installment. But isn't it rather sad that such guides need actually to be written to make fandoms work?

Errata... Ah — 1998. Guys, not wanting to spoil the fun, but I'll believe it when I see it. Until then I'll have another cup of tea and a cookie, please.

STAR aWARDs Ceremony: Congrats, everybody. I love the photos. Now if Georgie L. comes up with new creatures, I know where he did get his inspirations. (Oops, sorry... I'll take it back. Please stop throwing dead Bothans at me!)

Michelle Malkin: Thou shalt not LUST. Therefore, go and apologize to Lord Vader immediately.

Matthew Whitney: I bought the new book *From SW to Indy...* Terrific reference material for all SW artists. At least now I know how many wrinkles make up a Weequay face.

About your question on Obi-Wan's appearance to Luke on Hoth: Since Luke seemed somehow surprised to hear “his master's voice” while frolicking in the snow it seems very likely that Ben remained in Nirwana for the whole time between the blowing up of the first Death Star and the Wampa attack. Guess the ole wizard spent the months in between by wintering in Florida like other people his age.

Regarding your next question on what went on during the 6 months between TESB and ROTJ: Leia learned Ubesian for her role as Booush, the bounty hunter. And Luke spent those 6 months in a military slammer for going AWOL directly after the attack on Hoth. He never informed anybody of his Jedi training on Dagobah!

On “Earth-izing SW”, I largely go along with you, but must say that *sometimes* (not *always*) a footnote is really the better way of explaining what needs to be explained. A footnote I can either read or skip — just as I please. If I'm not desperate to know just how many gun turrets of what type a certain bulk cruiser of whatever provenience has, then I'll just read on and ignore the asterisk behind the

fancy name. What's much worse to me is when all the information about something/someone is inserted in the story, thereby interrupting the flow of proceedings. I hate it when (as unfortunately quite common in books on warfare) the author puts a full stop to the mounting suspense of a kamikaze attack just to tell us in epic broadness all about the technical data of the involved flying machines and of the piloting skills required to make them soar.

Maggie Nowakowska: The difference between pro and fan lit? Maybe I expect too much from a person who gets paid for writing (from the misconception that if I'm having fun concocting my — however mediocre ramblings — a pro author must have fun, too when writing SW stories). What I miss most in pro lit is the lack of feeling. Stories are written about what a character does or what happens to him, but not about his feelings, his beliefs, his self-justification for his actions. Fan lit, on the other hand, does not remain “on the outside looking in”, but dares to go inside the fictional characters. Of course, I'm fully aware of the fact that it is extremely difficult to write anything of interest when restrictions of the most severe kind apply. So who knows how I would do (probably fail miserably!) under the given circumstances. But nevertheless, what the pros are cooking is too often lacking in the spice department. As you so cleverly put it: Mundane fan writing.

About the fragility of republics ...

(a) Something that is deadly to any state form (republic or empire) is vastness of size, making them hard to develop and difficult to control/govern. The “Old Republic” of SW fame, spanning several star systems (if not a whole galaxy) must have suffered the resulting problems to an even greater extent than the Roman Empire, the USSR, etc.

(b) Also a major downfall to any republic is possibly existing cultural diversification. If too many different ethnic groups, which do not get along with one another for various reasons, find themselves crammed all under one roof, a lot of pressure by one particular political, religious or ethnic group (former Yugoslavia, ex-USSR for instance) is needed to keep them in line. As soon as the pressure is gone: WHAMMO!

(c) The third pitfall is, that in democratic republics the people (or representatives of said people) are usually all pulling on one rope — but unfortunately not all into the same direction! And the friendlier, more liberal and people-oriented politics in such republics are, the easier they will be misinterpreted as an invitation to “do as you please and take what you get”. Too many folks, it seems, are mistaking democracy for anarchy. When this has gone on for quite a while a new “strong man” (single person/party leader or military group) will appear on the scene and

"bring order to the galaxy". This often finds the approval of the so-called "silent majority" in the republic. And like taking for granted that a parental "yes" to a request for 1 cookie after dinner also applies to 5 cookies before dinner, the new man/men in charge will not stop sweeping with an "iron broom" after the initial "cleansing" is done. Automatically whoever is in power assumes that it will also be OK with the people if borderlines get redrawn, new laws installed and old ones changed or scratched as it pleases the "big cheese". By the time the majority finds out that the new leader(s) don't exactly live up to the expectations, it's usually too late to stop the one(s) in charge. Disillusioned (after total disaster of the economical kind or after a devastating war) a new try is made at bringing back democracy. The shock of having barely survived a disaster (politically and otherwise) makes people stay in line and appreciate democracy for a good number of years ... until deterioration of democratic values along with disillusionment in the "new order" begins to set in again with the fading of memories of negative experiences during the "good ole times".

As much as I go along with you on your excellent explanations regarding the old/new Republic in the SW universe, I must say that my opinion on people remembering that extremes aren't the norm does differ a little from yours. I rather get the impression that memory is a very individual thing, directly related to one's very own experiences and not easily passed on to following generations or even other individuals of the same generation. (Try telling kids of today that there was life before TV!) Considering that "time heals everything" and that memory glorifies even the hardest of experiences, it is more likely that every generation will (maybe must) meet it's very own Waterloo for lack of remembrance.

Gads ... politics!! Stop me before this gets serious.

Louise Turner: You are of course right with your statement that civil wars are a different game altogether. But even talking "regular" wars: considering that opinions on what's acceptable behavior and what's not have changed dramatically over the years, our wars of the past would probably look quite differently were they fought today. So who knows whether today's adversaries in any given "regular" war would share drinks and even laughs in neutral ports.

And while we're at it: Since mentality differs in people of different ethnic backgrounds (a Masai warrior setting his priorities much differently than a Norwegian, and what might seem outrageously cruel to a Martian might be ok to a Klingon), and since social status, education and traditions do affect our ways of thinking I think that the escalation we have seen/still see taking place in wartimes are, among other factors, related to the personality of the people involved as well. How much would that affect the SW

adversaries? For instance, it seems to be perfectly acceptable for any Ewok to eat his enemies.

And, now that I come to think of it: Does the term "civil war" really apply in the case of SW? After all, in SW we see a seemingly all-human Empire fight against a mixed bag of rebels. Why is that? Are all non-humans on the side of the rebellion? Are there Imperial troops (for reference, see the Ghurkas fighting so bravely for the British in past wars, or the famous French Foreign Legion) that are not "all male, all white, all middle aged"? Does the Empire have it's very own troops made up of "foreign" volunteers?

And can warfare between humans and Wookiees (or Ewoks, Mon Calamari, etc.) be considered "civil warfare"? (Could the Indian wars of the Old West be termed "civil wars"? Is it fair to assume that fighting even between two separate planet systems is "civil", as long as both planets (countries) are members of the same Republic/Empire — no matter whether forced into the same by political repression or not? (See the Russian/Tchetchen conflict) And would a civil war not require first of all a formal secession of certain countries/planets/systems from the union? Isn't this "civil war" in SW more like the (bloody) quelling of an uprising, lacking a formal war declaration resp. a formal proclaimed secession?

Egad — another can of worms opened. I ought to shut up.

About the ducks, dogs and other beasties... I refuse to view the Ewok movies as part of the SW saga. I see them merely as vehicles that came surfing along on the immense wave of success the SW trilogy stirred up. Something to squeeze more money out of kids' (and parents') pockets.

Minky: "Darthie" ... in pink nubuk? PINK??? All of a sudden it gets warm in here, don't you think? Anyway, the JC Penney folks either ought to rename that pretty shoe or give that name to something more fitting, like black riding boots for instance.

Nancy Stasulis: *Terrific cartoon!!* I love it. Keep up the good work.

Ming the Merciless: Like your answer to Minky — about the policemen/Jedi. Excellent point.

By the way, in case you forgot again: You are the publisher of *Bright Center...*, which is set in the SW universe. You know the SW saga, do you?

The mind is the second thing to go!

And on a final note: There is (and you all have seen it of course) a *new* timeline in the last issue of the *SW Insider*. Now Uncle Georgie is giving us his opinion on what happened when. Only ... it raises more questions than it answers. Obi-Wan was, according to George, in his 60's during ANH. Darth is 20 years younger. Full stop here... so that means that the old codger Luke found when taking that helmet off was a man in his mid- to late 40's???

BROTHER!!! And when he was in his early 30's when he and Ben battled it out at that lava pit of ill fame, then he must have become a daddy while in his 20's, right? Because Luke and Leia are 20 at the beginning of ANH. Hm, so if the twins were born *before* he became a Dark Lord of the Sith, then he *must* have known about the kids... or did Mama Skywalker wait until her hubby was on an extended business trip to Dagobah to deliver the babies and have them brought out of the country? *That* timeline, dear George, didn't do us much good, I'm afraid. The man loves mysteries. Besides, the man is ruining my wonderful SW calendar that I made for myself as a reference list.

And yes, I have another clue that Anakin knew about his son. Or why else would Obi-Talk-through-the-hat-Kenobi tell the kid, "Your father wanted you to have this when you were old enough, but your uncle wouldn't allow it!"

Enough of that. I'm out of here. All of you I didn't address personally this time around: please feel hugged and kissed. Keep your spaceships flying ...

First LoC

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This is my first letter and I'm glad to be joining the fold. Enjoyed Z.P.'s book review and the Seven Deadly Sins of Fandom. I haven't been around long enough to commit many but I'll try my best. Loved the MWC pictures. Neat to see what some of my favorite authors look like. Loved the doll pics. I'd be curious to know what other dolls were used to make the characters. Especially Lando. Who'd you use? Maybe Debbie could let me know in the next issue. Liked the E-Mail addresses. Could you include mine: FREDERIC@QVSD.K12.PA.US.

Laura Virgil: Keep dreaming and working. You'll get to work for LFL or some other cool place one day. Thanks for sharing your story.

Jacqueline Taero: I think Yoda did know that Obi-Wan was training Anakin. Ben probably asked Yoda to train him, and when Yoda refused, decided to train Anakin himself. In ESB Yoda says that Luke is like his father, implying that he perhaps had known Anakin personally. Perhaps Anakin had even begun training under Yoda, but was expelled when Yoda realized the danger. Maybe Anakin then went to Ben to finish his training, perhaps even lying and saying that Yoda had become ill? Story idea anyone?

Mary Jo Fox: Amen to your comments about fan vs. pro fiction. Liking or not liking pro-fiction does not make

one a "real fan." I take offense at someone else deciding who's real or not. Same goes for inclusion of pro-writers characters in a 'zine story. Nothing the fans write is canon anyway, so writers should include whichever characters they enjoy writing about. Some folks have been writing for years in their own post-ROTJ universe and I welcome their views along with the pro novels and fans who use the pro novels ideas. Then I incorporate them all into my own universe and that's the best part. (I once had a dream to take all my favorite fan stories, photocopy them, and place them in chronological order. It's good that I don't have the money to do that or I'd never got anything done.)

Also, I don't get the people who resent Leia. What's the point? I liked your comparison of fans who are militant in their dislike of characters to *Misery*. That was on the money.

Debbie Kittle: How'd you make your Lando doll? I thought I saw him in one of the pics Cheree ran. Completely agree that the pro stuff is written for a general audience and under some pretty heavy restrictions. No wonder some aren't happy with the way it turns out. Good point about writing to pro's to let them know what you think, and about being polite. Screaming about how much you hate the pro novels gets old after a while too. A friend of mine can't say enough bad things about Timothy Zahn and frankly I'm tired of listening to it. You didn't like it as much as I did? Fine. We don't have to agree 100%. Now can we move on please?

Barbara Anderson: Good comparison to pizza. I like to have all possible SW writings to look at. Then I can take the stuff I really like to heart, be it fan or pro.

Matthew Whitney: The reestablishment of the Jedi should not be a given. Anderson briefly touched on this in *Jedi Search*, and I've seen it explored in fanfic even to the point of putting a death warrant on Luke. The truth would probably be somewhere in between, perhaps officially sanctioned though some extremist might send a sniper after new Jedi.

Maggie Nowakowska: Lando does deserve better than the pro novels. Some of them totally ignore him. I've liked your fanfic Lando better: he's much cooler (not simply a dweebish greed meister) and shrewder. You don't get to run a big-time, slightly shady, gas mining outfit by being incompetent. I especially objected to Anderson's portraying Lando as falling all over Mara Jade even though she was clearly not interested. Roger MacBride Allen started out playing him for laughs, though I'm hoping he gives Lando a lady friend in the third book.

Was a little concerned about your use of the terms "mundane fans" and "in the trade" fans. You probably didn't mean anything about it, but labels really bother me.

Yes, let's have all new actors for the trilogy. Kenneth Branagh is just fine, but I'd much prefer a near-unknown

as Ben.

Louise Turner: I got your "Human League" joke.

Carolyn Gollledge: Congrats on a pro job. I'll definitely be picking up that issue of the *Journal*. You're a perfect example of why A. C. Crispin shouldn't knock fanfic.

Cheree: Liked your comment about male and female fans liking different pro novels. I am wondering if males in general tend to like the pro novels better. Comments, anyone?

Tim Blaes: Yes, my brother in comicdom. Have you read *Oh My Goddess*, *Caravan Kid*, *Mermaid Forest*, *Hulk*? These are just a few of my faves and I've been jumping up and down for joy with the release of the *Starblazers* comic. Anybody else out there think that was just about the best animated thing ever done? Part SW, part Trek and part something else. Highly recommended.

Z. P. Florian: I think Leia's advice to Luke to "run away" was in character. Yes, Leia was one tough gal and a true warrior, but she was also fairly ignorant of a Jedi's capability. She probably thought Luke didn't have a snowball's chance on Tatooine of turning Vader back or defeating Palpie. She was using common sense, and maybe also protecting Luke from turning to the darkside. Also, she had just found out Luke was her brother, the only real family she had left. How could she bear to lose him too?

Marlene Karkoska: Yeah, DE II left me kinda flat. No real resolution of the problem. I hope he's just setting up for something good in DE III. Re: Luke's weird characterization in *The Crystal Star*: wasn't he supposed to be acting so out of it because of his close proximity to Waru, or did I just interpret it wrongly?

Anyone and Everyone: I'm enjoying Dark Horse's *X-Wing Squadron* and *River of Chaos*. Anybody else? Jabba the Hutt and Droids are okay, but kinda like light beer, less filling. The new Kenner figures will be out soon, so I can finally own a Threepio who stands up instead of the weak-jointed original I've been suffering all these years. No Lando or Yoda though. Maybe in the next batch. I'm reserving judgment on *Shadows of the Empire*. It's hard to get into a computer game as canon and I'm afraid I'll be disappointed.

Take care all.



Intriguing Group of Fans

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Galactic Greetings! I received my first SE (#42) this month and I must say that I have never before witnessed a more intriguing group of SW LoC's! It has certainly inspired me to write and jump on the SW discussion band wagon, so to speak. But first I'll briefly go into my "SW background". I was only a youngster when SW first opened, but when I finally "discovered" SW when TESB came out I was hooked for life (I was around 7 or 8 then. In fact between my mom and my grandma I was able to view TESB on the big screen 15 times; not bad for a kid.). I have never considered myself as being a "new" fan" because I have been one nonstop for the past 12 years or so although I'm not necessarily an "old" fan since I wasn't old enough to know anything about it at first. Is there a term for this situation?

Before I go on I'd like to ask a question (and my apologies for not already knowing as I get the feeling [the Force perhaps? <grin>] I should.) What is the Dead Bothan Society? How/when and why was it started? Also what does JAM/CML stand for? (*Ed: The Dead Bothan Society is the tongue-in-cheek name chosen by a group of East Coast fans, roughly centered around Washington, DC. JAM/CML was coined by Maggie Nowakowska and means "Just a Movie" and "Changed My Life."*)

Jacqueline Taero: If Yoda didn't know Obi-Wan was training Anakin it may be because Jedis can't foresee everything. When Luke asked Yoda if his friends on Cloud City would die Yoda replied that he did not know.

Concerning the affects of Alderaan's destruction on people of other worlds; besides the terror which they surely would have felt I imagine that a few people at least would try to find the means by which they could go to planets or moons far away from the DS that were of little or no importance to the Empire (or ones that were of great importance to the Empire depending on their point of view). Perhaps, in their panic, they turned to or rebelled against their own leaders.

Since when did the Empire care about public relations? Especially since they had the DS and very powerful "wizards" from the Dark Side (Palpatine, Vader). They probably didn't care who knew about the destruction of Alderaan. With the power the DS held some of the Empire probably thought of themselves as invincible.

A. G. Steyn: I don't think that Darth Vader was Beru's type. I think that Owen's disallowing talk of Vader in his

house was because he knew what Anakin had become and feared Luke would follow in his footsteps. Perhaps Owen was even *friends* with Anakin and had become angry and unforgiving of the fact that his friend had turned to the Dark Side.

I enjoyed your paragraph on the Jedi Children, very funny — and true!

Everyone: Re the answers/comments about Luke being unemotional concerning his guardians' deaths. I enjoyed everyone's comments and feel that they are all equally valid. The question could also be put to Obi-Wan. He was Owen's *brother* yet he was more unemotional than Luke. Of course he lived on Tatooine also and had fought in the Clone Wars and had seen death, but still. In fact he even tried to deter Luke from going back home! Could it be that he knew Luke's destiny was instrumental in saving the galaxy and that if he were to fulfill his destiny he should let Owen and Beru die lest he stay on Tatooine until it was too late? Comments?

Someone asked about the time between movies. Why did Obi-Wan wait so long (3 years) to tell Luke to go to Dagobah? Perhaps it was a preparatory state for Luke. He may have needed those three years to learn first hand what the Alliance was all about and discover what he truly wanted to fight or even die for before going off and learning how to use all this power and not knowing what to do with it. I believe that it was the knowledge/memory of his friends (the friendships he developed during those three years) that helped him remain true to himself and stick to the Good Side of the Force.

Why did it take so long to rescue Han (6 mo. to a year)? If you notice Jabba accepted Leia (as the Bounty Hunter — I can't recall the name. Does anyone remember it?) into his palace — *but* he did not trust her. However, we see Lando as a guard in his palace and he was even one of the ones to push Leia up to Jabba after she was caught defreezing Han. Lando was obviously in a position of trust (if Jabba trusts anybody at all). It would take at least 6 months if not longer to gain that kind of trust and to be able to inform his comrades just where Han was and the goings on from within.

Marti Schuller: Loved your comments re Luke as a survivor.

Tim Blaes: What is "Leia vs. Murphy's Law"? Did you write it? I do read comics other than SW. My favorite series is *Angela* (three *Angela* titles — a spin off from *Spawn* #9). I also like *Elfquest*, *Ladydeath* (sometimes), *Shadowhawk*, the *X-Men* (some — I dig Wolverine and Storm. I like the *Age of Apocalypse* series also), etc.

Back to the SW aspect of comics — there are many SW comics that were published during the 70's and 80's that can still be found at collector shops. The latest one I saw (the comic version of ANH) was odd sized and was up to

\$20.00. I didn't buy that particular one, but it's interesting to see what's out there.

Z. P. Florian: Vader wanting to eliminate the Emperor to bring peace to the galaxy? No way! He wanted to rule in the Emperor's place! As he told Luke, he wanted to rule the universe as father and son and if Luke wouldn't rule with him so be it — it wasn't going to stop him.

As for Leia suggesting that Luke run away I believe it was said more out of shock of what she just learned than out of her truly meaning it. It was also out of concern for Luke since she knew full well how powerful Vader was. But, if you note, she also corrected herself by saying "I wish I could go with you" meaning go with him to face Vader. Let's face it, all of a sudden finding out that your dear friend and comrade is your brother, learning that the evil Dark Lord of the Sith is your father and that this new found sibling is going to battle him is a lot to take in in such a short space of time. Also, before, her bravery mostly had to do with herself. Yes, *she* faced Tarkin and Vader with insults. Yes, she withstood the mind probe. She killed Jabba. For the most part these things affected her. If she failed then she would die and the Alliance could send another. But could Luke defeat Darth Vader? Would she lose the friend of only a few years and the brother of only a few minutes?

Marlene Karkoska: What was the Great Church of Ford/Cathedral of Luke controversy? Why/how did it start? I've not heard of it before. ((*Ed: After ROTJ came out, a fierce debate arose in SW fandom between a group of fans, who were rabidly devoted to Harrison Ford and thought Han was the real hero of the trilogy and that Luke had fallen to the Dark, and another group of fans who were just as passionately putting forth Luke Skywalker's cause. It descended rapidly into full-scale war and turned very ugly. SW fandom is still suffering the repercussions of it. Let's leave it dead and buried — where it belongs!!*))

I enjoyed the examples you gave from the SW radio dramatization. I haven't been fortunate enough to hear/own it so it's great to hear snatches of it.

Everyone: I used to wonder why the 3rd movie was called ROTJ. Is it because there were no Jedis left after Yoda died until Luke fought Vader and thus became one — hence the return? Or perhaps was it because Vader turned back to the Good Side of the Force before he died? I think it had to do with both. Within just a few minutes we had the return of the Jedi in general when Luke fought Vader and did not turn, and we had the return of Anakin when Vader destroyed the Emperor to save his son. So within this small time frame we had two returns. This is the only thing I can think of. Thoughts anyone? Comments?

Until Next Time — May the Force be with You in your Sky Walk of Life.

Painful to Read

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September 23, 1995

Hi again, Cheree and all. As usual getting this in later than hoped, but this has been one Bantha sized summer. Marie Treleven has been to see me 2 times. Decided she could not see me suffering anymore with the K-oss I had in the Library, so she made a trip down and we spent 3 whole days sifting, and organizing and getting at least 70% in some semblance of order. We went to a small con in LA and had a blast too. Later this summer Anette Steyn arrived and we spent 4 days together driving around and viewing Harrison tapes, and doing SW things, reviewing stories for B.C. #6 and just having another great time.

On top of that had a couple of surprises when the local TV station called and wanted to do an interview on the Library. It was great fun, being wired for sound and watching the camera man angle around in the 20 inch spaces between shelves. No sooner was that completed than the local paper came out to do an interview. Said he wanted to stay about an hour and was here for two and a half. Am waiting now to see results if any.

So much for personal. Now...

Jacqueline Taero: Elegant weapon. Well in any area where weapons are routinely used or carried you would tend to equate function and craftsmanship. Luke had a weapon when he went after R-2. It is likely he was more than familiar with its use and probably that of other lethal equipment. Pilots compare planes, auto drivers compare cars.

Long term psychological effects — a sense of insecurity!!! Man has been living with that since the start of time. The insecure feeling could not be any different than knowing your home might be destroyed by a hurricane, or earthquake, or bomb as in WW2 or Mt. St. Helens. You know there is nothing you can do about it, so you don't think about it.

Marti Schuller: As always the problem of evil is, exactly what is it? We are told Palpatine was evil, but exactly what did he do to show that? Eat babies for breakfast? He was a politician. Did he really start out with a good idea and end up with the German or Russian political situation or was he simply an egomaniac who could not see any of his wishes throttled?

Debbie Kittle: Well until we know what spice is (was) we cannot really say if Han was a good or reprehensible person. Prohibition made bad people out of perfectly

honest citizens because it was set to run many people out of business. It made a perfect set up for the gangsters to come in and set up shop. Could be the Empire did some such thing with the spice?

Barbara Anderson: Yep, line the mynock cages!!!! Come on now — with the good writers in SW fandom, why pick people who either it seems had never seen the movies, or didn't care diddly about them. The stories themselves might have been good, if they had only used the characters as they were originally developed. As it was the books were painful to try and read.

Michelle Malkin: Cheers and Cheers for you, lady! I really have a thing about authors who started or continue to write in fanzines and then pan them. This type of action is not only ungracious, it is downright stupid. Several of the authors who have won acceptance in the pro world started out as fan writers. I think this should encourage others to try their hand at writing. Whether they ever make it into the Pro (if they want to) or not is immaterial; they are at least writing.

Matthew Whitney: Well, being a dyed in the Bantha Fur SW Fan, I am looking forward to the next film, but I must admit not with the enthusiasm I did before the new books came out!! Why do I have this sinking feeling? Could it be that we all know Lucas is more interested in the technology involved in the films, than the actual stories? As for the use of made up languages, well, as usual I am two faced about that. If one uses a made up word such as "Zork", that should be explained, but I have a built in bias against stove (use cooker, heater, etc.), bathroom (that is really English! is the person really taking a bath or ??). Sano or necessary do very well here. Gun, sword, knife are good, descriptive words. Best I believe to think about the word you are using, made up or other wise!

Maggie N.: Well, the SW group is really trying to get new fans involved, but it is sometimes an uphill battle, and, Maggie, please contact me about *Scoondrel*. The Library does not have a full set, and neither do I. And thanks for your ideas on the POV of older fans and what they got out of the films. Trying to fit modern day interpretation on previous eras is ridiculous. Like asking Henry Ford why he could not see that his model T could use a Turbo engine. What we saw, what we experienced, what we got out of the movies were all seen through our years of living, our experiences, and our cultural upbringing.

Louise Turner: Space Wedgie. Hey, I like that!!! The same thing is happening to Boba. It's great. There are a lot of other characters in SW, and we are just loosing the strings and starting to write about them, and adding new ones also, and giving the universe a history. I hope you can refine your interest.

Carolyn Golledge: Congrats on your West End stories.

Gerald Crotty: Got a chuckle out of the alien girl friend

bit. What is Alien? Some one from another planet, another species? Sounds like our local Native American (Indian) problem, who have recently had to lower their requirement for being Indian to 10% as there were not enough of the 25% Indians to make a tribe.

Donna Frayser: Hi. Well, we do not see eye to eye on using strange words in the SW Universe. Earth has a 24 hour day, but other planets could have variations. Using hours, seconds, minutes is OK. As an editor I would accept that, but a time part is more acceptable, because we are not describing the length of that time part. What if you had a day that was 23 and 3 quarters hours long? As for first meal — well, not all cultures have a breakfast in the morning. Many have a first meal at noon or some have only one meal a day, so a first meal really does make more sense.

Z. P. Florian: Words of Fear. Well, if you were one of the universe's top gangsters, would you be likely to categorize your police force as friendly? The Jedi were the police force of the Galaxy using their mind tricks instead of weapons if they could, but that apparently did not work with some species. Love your grammar, Lady!!

Marlene Karkoska: I am not surprised at the crowds the showing draw out. Every few years the Trilogy is shown here in Santa Barbara and always the line goes down around the corner so to speak. People love these movies, especially when they have the chance to see them on the wide screen.

Well enough. If I don't stop soon this will become the letter that ate New York.

Remember Alderaan!

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September 21, 1995

I know. I know. I move more often than the Rebel Alliance. What can I say, except that this move will shorten my commute from 50 min. to 10 min. each way, as well as provide better landlords, more space and lower my rent without sacrificing quality. It's worth it, and believe me — I HATE moving. I'm really hoping to have a Dead Bothan House Warming party sometime in the not-too-distant future; maybe New Years, or do you still want that dubious honor, Liz S.?

Another bit of good news: I am formally adopting two beautiful kittens shortly after my move. Both are male, around 6 months old at the moment, and although from different litters, they are obvious buddies. I suspect they

are Angora (Ankora), even though they are not the standard white. Macavity (Mac) is solid — I mean *solid* — black with gold eyes, and Gusset (Gus) is solid grey with green eyes. I'm very excited to have new additions to my family.

Awright, who sent in the "lovely" photos from MediaWest?! Jennifer M.? Debbie K.? (I want a copy of the one with the bunny slippers!)

Jacqueline T.: You brought up some good questions re: everyone's reaction to the destruction of Alderaan. I've given a lot of thought to just that subject, and have been trying to incorporate bits into my own writing. One possible reaction could be similar to our own regarding the atrocities taking place in countries like Bosnia, or the step-by-step invasion of the Nazi regime and Imperial Japan nearly 55 years ago. One massacre here, one crushed protest there, each incident followed by a statement of disapproval but no positive action to prevent more of the same. But eventually, the cumulative bloodshed is simply too much to ignore, or more likely there is a direct assault that finally provokes a reaction. Couldn't it stand to reason that the Empire's growth had simply been tolerated, until its rash destruction of Alderaan ultimately lead to its own downfall? No doubt most people not directly affected by what the Empire had done up to that point held the same opinion that Luke initially did in ANH — it's tragic and sad, but far away and I've got more important things to worry about. The bold destruction of a relatively innocent planet, however, might bring home the very real threat of Imperial domination — just as cries of "Remember Pearl Harbor" rang out, so might "Remember Alderaan." People and planets previously hesitant to become involved or chose sides might finally join together against a common enemy. How ironic that the Empire's ultimate display of aggressive power would result in its own undoing. A bittersweet victory for Princess Leia and her fellow refugees, perhaps, but a victory nonetheless... Oh well, it's only a theory.

A. G. Steyn: Wir alles Deutsch sprechen, weil es so viel Spass macht! Nicht wahr? :) Actually, I *do* enjoy it, so I'm always anxious to practice. Every once in a while I spend an entire day thinking/speaking (when possible) in German. In Ulm, um Ulm, und Ulm arum!

Mary Jo Fox: Hear, hear! Vote, vote, vote! Even if you've only read one or two candidates in the entire year, vote for the ones you liked best; the writers/artists/editors put no less effort into their work, just because you didn't necessarily scope out the competition. There must be at least 50 people who subscribe to SE alone (Right, Cheree?), not to mention those who borrow.

There are many, many more who read the 'zines. There's no excuse for *not* participating. Besides, if you really love a person's work, the best way to let them know

it is vote — it's a positive statement that you want more from them. They won't know, otherwise.

Debbie K.: So, when's that Peggy Sue Death-Hawk doll going to make her appearance? (Just kidding — I shudder at the thought!) Anyway, I'm still pissed off about the latest wide-screen cards (TESB). I bought a box, and not only did I *not* end up with one entire set, I was over 30 cards short!! 30 out of 120 (or whatever!) is pretty rotten, if you ask me. Besides, the majority of them (what I've seen of them!) are either special FX or extremely dark exposures, to the point that all you might see is a shaft of red or blue surrounded by black. I can count the number of good Han shots on one hand. They're nowhere near the quality of the SW set, and I'd had such high hopes since TESB is my favorite film. It's sort of killed any desire to pick up the ROTJ cards whenever they arrive... The JPark dinosaur is dead??!!

Barbara A.: "Epiphany," huh? I can't even *say* that! But your description of MediaWest this year was spot-on. I've always taken an active role in blurring those lines between the SW cliques (for lack of a better term), and am truly thrilled to watch now as everyone starts to mingle. Although fascinated by how differently each and every one of us views and interprets the SW movies, I've never understood why we've stayed so diligently (almost militantly) divided along those lines of preference. "Star Wars is as Star Wars does," as Bobba Gump would say.

Michelle M.: Sorry about the mixup, but I'd meant male/female writing teams within the SW universe. I only know of a handful of men involved in active SW fandom, and half of them are artists.

Matthew W.: Hmm. Books vs. CD-ROMs. There's no competition. There's nothing I love better than to relax in the bathtub with an electrical appliance.

Seriously, there's no argument that computers have had an enormous affect on our lives, and I'm not knocking them (I'm about ready to sell my soul for one in fact) but there is still a long way to go before it can compare to the invention of the printing press. For example, has the literacy rate gone up or down since the advent of the PC, as compared to books? How many people claim to have developed cancer from the radiation given off by a good book? Then there's the question of cost: (1) How many households actually have a PC? (2) How many people regularly buy a new release in hardcover, when they average \$20? How many cringe at the price, even as they do so? (3) Despite constant talk of how the cost of production of Compact Disks has gone down, why hasn't the price of a typical music CD (\$14) dropped in the past 10 years? Can we safely assume that the same will happen with CD-ROM "books"? (4) How much would a new release on CD-ROM cost, \$20 or more? Who hasn't complained at one time or another that they remember

when books cost only \$3.99, or \$2.99, or even (imagine!) \$.99? How ready are you to rush out and plop down \$20 or more for the latest fast-read pulp by Crichton, Koonz or King? (5) Will we have to accessorize? The most I've ever bought in order to read books was a bookmark. Finally, yes, the technology may save a few trees, but the plastics, metals and various other compounds used to make a CD aren't exactly grown in the backyard either. All in all, I agree fully with the value of containing entire encyclopedias and dictionaries on disk, but as for sitting at a desk in front of a glowing screen in order to relax with a novel, it will never compare to reclining at the beach, in the living room, or late at night in bed.

Maggie N.: Man, I'd love to sit and talk with you some time! You're absolutely right in your response to my comments last time. I'm not always so accurate in expressing what I'm thinking. Success or failure, like so many other things, is relative. Obviously the Republic had to be extremely flexible to endure for so many generations — the rise of Palpatine could simply have flexed the Republic to the snapping point.

Louise T.: Continuing on about Imps/Rebels in a neutral setting... Is the situation in SW truly a civil war? Granted, I myself am guilty of referring to it in those terms within my storyline, but that aside, consider this: If the Stormtroopers are indeed clones, then the battles aren't really brother against brother, but rather brother against himself... But seriously, the Alliance itself consists of innumerable planets, cultures and species — perhaps the only thing they have in common is that they don't want to be ruled by the Empire. A civil war (a misnomer in and of itself) is basically one culture or country, split by ideology or politics, etc. Even the war in Bosnia is not really a civil war, but rather a normal (sic) war of aggression, since those participating are not nor ever were of the same culture. The unity that was known as Yugoslavia was forced upon them, just as the Empire was forced (no pun intended) upon the SW universe. (If the USA and Britain decided to revolt against the UN, it wouldn't be a civil war, would it?) Yes, if the Stormtroopers are clones, chances are that the war would be incredibly vicious, simply because one side would probably have no sense of morality or mercy, and the other (the Rebels) would view their enemy as less than "human". On the other hand, if the Stormtroopers are made up of conscripts, volunteers, or otherwise free-thinking beings, there is a chance that they might still share common ideas with the Rebels (those conscripts had to come from somewhere) — this doesn't mean that the war would be any less bloody, only that there would be no absolutes... Ah, but there's an idea!! What if the Stormtroopers are nothing more than drafted soldiers, with no particular conviction towards the Emperor (a.k.a. the Wehrmacht of Germany vs. the Waffen SS)? That

would certainly explain why they can't hit the side of a sandcrawler at 50 paces — sabotage of a sort, if you've no other choice... Again, another theory.

Liz S.: So glad you could join us in the Cantina this year! Told you it was fun. That was definitely the best dance yet, and I swear, if it takes all the energy that I can muster, I will get every Dead-Beat Bothan out on that dance floor! By the way, Peggy Sue Death-Hawk *owns* the bar now, so watch it.

Nancy S.: Whoa, Nancy! Are you in my neighborhood? Can we put you on the DB mailing list?

Jennifer M.: Beware, I may yet again spontaneously call and say: (with an extremely thick Wisconsin accent) "Hey, how yah doin'? Wanna come over for a beer?"

Tim B.: re: the (literally) "Dark Empire" comics. I suspect that there was a clearance sale on green paint. Your opinion? By the way, I want to sincerely thank you for unintentionally becoming the night-guard for the Cantina at MediaWest. I know you would rather have had a hotel room, but your sacrifice was much appreciated by all those who had valuable objects and/or equipment stored there, myself included. If you're at all interested in doing the same again next year, the spot is open! :)

Anybody: It doesn't take a brain surgeon to guess how most of you feel about the re-release of the saga with the added footage. I would like to know, however, how everyone feels about the fact that Lucas intends to permanently remove his originals (w/their Oscar-winning editing, mind you) from the shelves.

IMO, not only is this a dumb move, it's a sacrilege — not because it's *Star Wars*, but because it's a completed piece of artwork. What if Davinci came back and said: "You know, I'd always wanted Mona Lisa's eyes to be blue, but I couldn't afford the paint. Now I can!"? Considering the fact that Lucas himself spoke out against Ted Turner's colorization of old B/W films, I find it highly hypocritical that he's decided to alter his own work now. You could argue that it's his work, and therefore his prerogative, but SW was a finished work, packaged and sold. If it were indeed a work in progress, it would not have been released. Of course I'm curious to see the cut-outs, but give me the option, please! What if Orson Wells came back and said: "I really intended a reunion with Rose Bud, but due to financial/technical/time restraints, it couldn't happen — but now it can. We have the technology! So I'm pulling the original you've known and loved for 55 years."? Didn't he catch on that the FX alone didn't make SW a success? There have been many movies more flashy and expensive since SW, but how many of them have had the staying power, or managed to influence an entire generation? Granted, there are times when I fancy his going back to fix ROTJ (which I firmly believe is broken), but not at the cost of the original film,

disagreeable as I may have found it. If Lucas is not happy with his original results, he should make a new film, not tinker with the old. And why is he pulling the originals out of circulation? Is he embarrassed, or just out to make a few extra dollars off a proven product? With any luck, he is going to sell all three new versions of each film (w/THX, w/THX & widescreen, and the new footage) to each indiscriminating fan who's driven to buy anything with the SW logo on it. Not too shabby, huh? To restate, I'm quite livid about this whole topic, not necessarily because I'm a SW fan, and not even because it's a perfect example of capitalism at its most ugly, but because I believe in preservation of original art, be it on canvas, parchment or celluloid. IMO, he is tampering with history, and I find that deplorable and unforgivable. ((Ed: Personally, I've always thought that Spielberg's revised version of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* ruined that film. The original showed a man whose life was rapidly falling apart due to circumstances he neither understood nor could control. The revision took a lot of Neary's humanity away and merely made him a puppet. Consequently, I've never bought a commercial copy of the movie.))

WELL. I guess I'll hop down off that overused soapbox now — the poor thing's sagging! I feel so much better, having gotten that off my chest, however. Viele Schoene Gruesse to everybody I didn't address directly. May we all meet at Eclecticon. Ciao!

Dead Bothan Social (Not a) Committee

Debbie Kittle
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September 26, 1995

Hello one and all. So much to talk about! There have been quite a few book releases since last SE: Both Corellian Trilogy books (enjoyed them both), 2 new kids books (well done), *Tales/Cantina* (an absolute delight) and the *Cantina Pop-up Book* (adorable with both lights and sound). Hallmark has both the cards (19 as of the above date) and 1996 calendar. Wonderfully done and the cards are a riot. More new toys are out: MF playset, the other 2 heads (Chewie and Trooper), the new figures and the MF that makes noise. I love them all especially the MF with lights and sound. The new figures are nicely done except for Luke. I think it's a case of too much steroids! The POGs have been out and are not that great. Some nice shots (Biggs on Tatooine) but very uneven distribution (even worse than the cards). And speaking of the cards —

the new ESB widevision cards. Whoa, what happened? They are too dark and some of the shots are of poor quality. I can only hope that the ROTJ set is like the first one.

The new THX remastered Trilogy is wonderful! The little green boxes are gone! It is beautiful! I enjoyed the interviews as well.

I liked the character biographies and the 7 Deadly Sins article. Laura Virgil's piece on the LucasArts workshop was nice and it sounds like a great place to work.

Just a quick note before I get to the letters: the weather this summer was disgustingly gross: too hot, too humid and too uncomfortable for me, not to mention a hell of a drought. Right now, it is raining (has been for 3 days) and the temps have been barely in the 60's. Anyone praying for an Indian summer will be tortured!

Jacqueline: Re: Luke, as the only Jedi stranded on Hoth and the brass not doing much in the way of rescuing — it is odd but maybe they figured being a Jedi, he should be able to take care of himself and not have to send out an entire legion and if he were in real trouble, that entire legion could be lost. The needs of the many...

Some interesting points you brought up about Ben/Yoda/Anakin and Alderaan and Tarkin. Yoda had to know about Ben training Anakin. Yoda probably told Ben to leave off, let others more experienced train Anakin. Ben probably felt that he should do it as he had discovered him.

The long term effects of losing Alderaan would run deep. Having never experienced anything like that, I can only guess. It's probably along the same lines as the 2 bombs dropped on Japan.

I can see the Alliance both losing (because they are scared that something like that could happen to them) and gaining (because they are angry at the Empire for the atrocity) planets.

If Tarkin didn't have some of the Emperor's support, then why would DV remain silent and watch as Alderaan was destroyed? Maybe that would not have been a choice had Tarkin asked point-blank. He might have told him to do whatever was necessary to show the true power of the Empire.

A. G.: Eclecticon photo as the inside of Jabba's palace?!? Good thing I was only the palace photographer. It was good to actually talk to you earlier this month and that your trip was going well.

Marti: Enjoyed your comments about Luke's humanity. Nicely put.

Mary Jo: Your comments on the Star aWards was right on the money. Wedding invitations? Good idea.

Barbara: Congrats on the promotion. You put into words the way I feel about SW: That anything is better than nothing!

Matthew: I have that *SW to Indy* book. It is gorgeous.

Maggie: I heartily agree re: "hesitation". I love a good debate and don't want people to stop expressing their opinions. I can see where some people go over the edge and attack everything in sight.

Louise: Glad you are enjoying *Ambush* and the wide-screen SW set.

Wow! Having a whale surface that close to you must have been incredible.

The new *X-Wing* comic is very well written but the illustrators have a problem with Wedge himself. I think they need to talk to Gerald — he does an incredible job.

I do hope you stay in SW fandom!

Carolyn: Congrats!! on selling your 2nd story to West End Games!

Nancy: Loved your cartoon! By now, I've contacted you and sent you the xeroxes of Maggie's article. Being the director of DBP/S(NA)C [Dead Bothan Planning/Social (Not A) Committee], Welcome to the Dead Bothans and the Hub of SW Activity!

Jennifer: Guess what? I am going to have a talk with those Hoth elves. I will beg, borrow, steal, plead and sacrifice whatever I need to in order to get 70 feet of snow dumped on my house (after a fly by at your place). I've melted and I can't get back together! And no, I ain't got no money! Destiny, AU, TRU, K-Mart and Walden's have all mine.

Gerald: Why did Ben wait to send Luke to Yoda? I think Luke had to discover things on his own, come to terms with the changes that had taken place in his life. In the Wampa cave when Luke tries to reach for his saber, he doesn't use the Force first, he tries to physically reach for it. My impression of the scene is that though the Force wasn't first in his thoughts, he may have used it sooner than other times.

As for Han's rescue, it took time to get everyone into place at Jabba's, Luke had to make a new saber and they still had to keep ahead of the Empire. They just couldn't go in and firebomb the place (though they ended up doing it that way anyway).

Cheree: Interesting observation you made about the novels and gender. I think you hit it right on the nailhead.

Donna: Glad you came "out of the closet". :) You should join in more — it's not as painful as it seems.

Tim: The Dead Bothan Society at this point will not become a rock band. Cheryl Pryor was selling our glorious T-shirts at MW this year. Contact her. I think she sold all she had but can order more. And remember, Friday is DB Day at MW.

I read other comic titles besides SW. Maximum Press has just come out with their new BG comic which is cool and I read a couple of ST ones as well as *Conan*.

The case of Winter (not the season but the person), I don't really dislike her but I won't rally behind her either.

I was so sure she was Delta Source. I pride myself on being able to guess "who done it" more times than not and when Delta Source turned out to be a tree, I got mad. I guess I am transferring some of my anger at the author to the character.

Z.P.: I liked *Voyager* until all the reruns at the end. No decent ender for the season. I think they screwed it up BIG time! I just hope the 2nd season is done better. I have enjoyed the few new episodes I've seen so far.

Marlene: Hi and welcome. The zine bibliography is put out by Judy Yuenger. Check the Mos Eisley Marketplace for price and address.

I disagreed on some of your points and agreed with some of your points on the pro novels. I did enjoy reading your opinions.

I read with interest your remarks on Luke and his sterility. I can see your view on it but I can also see Marti's.

Amanda: No 2nd or 3rd jobs yet but soon. Thanks for your comments on the doll exhibit. A national tour? Groan!

I have 5 Han winkie cards now (thanks to you and Marti).

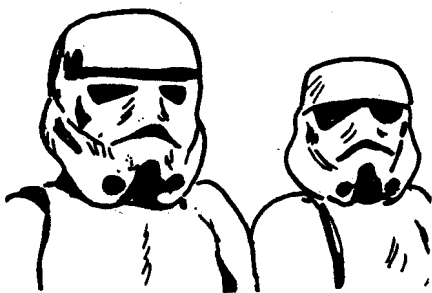
My filks are for reading/singing, not swimming :). Glad you're enjoying them.

Just a few more comments and then I'll sign off. This year will be my first SW Christmas and I am anxiously awaiting all my toys and gifts! I hope everyone has an excellent Holiday Season.

If anyone wishes to purchase any of Louise Turner's zines, please contact me. Louise and I have an arrangement in regards to the money so please send your checks made out to Deborah L. Kittle and I will pass on the order to her. It's easier for her to cash one large check instead of a lot of smaller checks.

Jennifer and I were watching the remastered Trilogy one night and were freeze framing ROTJ at the end when Luke is being electrocuted by Palpie. Most people have seen the flash of skeleton when Vader picks up the Emperor but you should freeze-frame it and advance one frame at a time. It shows you just how human he is. Only his skull and ribcage are made of bones. His left shoulder, left hand, what's left of his right hand, right arm and neck are all made up of gears, wires, plates and metal rods. It was really cool to see all that. Take care all!

Fly Casually!



Wrong Uniform

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Isn't it great how SW has been all over the place, largely due to the blitz surrounding the videos' rerelease? For the first time in who knows how long, middle America cannot escape the power of the Force! Safeway was selling copies of the videos, for petey's sake! This is just the beginning.

Hope Eclecticon II was decent for those who went. Due to uncertain employment and finances, I was unable to attend.

Matthew: I remember the really ugly letters that appeared in *Starlog* during the Classic Trek v. TNG debacle. People actually wasted time, ink, and paper arguing over who was better, Kirk or Picard. Sure, TNG's first season had some kinks, but eventually the writers found their space legs and managed to put out a terrific show. Nevertheless, some Classic-only Trekkers still turned their collective noses up at TNG. In 1993, I remember this one older guy at a con who saw a young man in a TNG Starfleet outfit and said something to the effect of, "You got on the wrong uniform." Please, don't let that happen here! (If there is such a day in the future where I get harassed for wearing the "wrong uniform," let it be said that the offending individual will win one free kick to the rear).

Tim: I'm glad you liked *Snowfire #1*. I'm happy to report that I completely sold out of my first printing. Granted, it had a fairly small run as compared with the bigger boys on the block, but I didn't think I'd unload them all so quickly. What's nice is that I think I got together a pretty decent mix of contributors — including male writers who disprove the stereotype that they're only interested in writing Rambo-esque fiction.

Cheree: Thanks for printing "The Seven Deadly Sins" and its accompanying list for con-goers. Finally, someone admits that common yet rarely-mentioned fan problem, lack of hygiene! Many times I have nearly died from being near some of these stinkers in a congested and poorly ventilated dealers' room. So please, everyone, urge your "hygienically-challenged" friends to bathe before attending a public event such as a con; if it's a medical problem, tell them to see a doctor.

As for the "gender gap" you mentioned, that seems to be a prevailing theory among some fans, but I don't think the lines are drawn that neatly (for example, I know female fans who loved some of the more "technical" books, and male fans who loved stuff by the women authors). Personally, I (being a gal) like a good mix of action,

adventure, some tech wizardry, and emotional content.

Louise: Well, you must have *some* enthusiasm left for SW if you're still here and still writing! I once wrote my own SW stories at age 8 or 9, and even though I wasn't writing SW through the teen and college years, I did have my own ideas on what could happen in the post-ROTJ universe. But I admit I wasn't all that attached to them as gospel, to me they were just theory. Even now, I don't consider my own stories as canon; to me they're just fantasy, extrapolation, a means to express my own ideas on certain characters and situations. Not to mention having some fun, getting some practice, and receiving a free zine in the bargain.

I know you're disappointed with the way Wedge was drawn in the new *X-Wing Rogue Squadron* comics. Allen Nunis has always been great at rendering ships and vehicles, but not-so-great with likenesses (I'm not fond of the way Wedge looks either). However, the writing's excellent. It's very true to the way the movies are, and it fleshes out Wedge, Janson, Winter, and the other space jockeys. Fun stuff. Don't worry, the comic will have different artists with each story arc. As for Dorman's covers, you always could donate a few pix from your still collection to help him out. Ouch! Maybe not...

Speaking of Wedge, what's up with your proposed Wedge zine?

Donna: Liked your story about Chaos in *Bright Center* #5. I wouldn't have known where to find any SW zines either if Lorrie Cherry and Melanie Gutierrez hadn't advertised in *Starlog*, which is why I try to get a notice in the Fan Network column at least once a year.

Minky: (They told me to call you that). Great, another M. J. in the neighborhood. I got a big laugh out of your "The Art of Jedi" in *I Don't Care What You Smell*.

Z.P.: I'd have to chalk up *Children of the Jedi* as one of my favorites, because I think Hambly was able to balance a lot of the SW elements successfully. She excels at characterization, but she can also handle the technical aspects of the SW universe. The plot was a unique concept too. As for your statement that Hambly didn't address enough (or maybe, the "right") questions, I'd have to disagree. Themes involving identity, technology, and the nature of the sentient spirit are addressed several times in numerous situations throughout the entire book — I'd discuss it here, but I don't want to spoil it for those who haven't read the book yet. I also think it's a little unrealistic to expect one author to touch upon every conceivable issue that one could draw from the movies in just one book, or even three. Even in fan fiction, I don't think every nuance has been addressed — I see numerous stories returning to the same themes time and time again. I know this is one area I'm kind of out in left field from most of the others here, but I don't think SW is all psychodrama and angst; it's

also an action/adventure story, and that's what a lot of folks buying these books expect. Geez, it's what I expect.

Now for some general comments/statements. As 1998 draws near, it's time for armchair theory on what will be in store for us. In the summer issue of the *SW Insider*, Lucas mentioned that he had a timeline set up for the new trilogy. If he sticks with this timeline, which he may or may not do, Anakin Skywalker will be a 10-year-old tyke when he meets up with Obi-Wan. This leads me to suspect that perhaps Anakin will be an orphan, a kid with a mysterious past who knows nothing of his latent powers. Obi-Wan finds the little guy and thinks, "Hey! He's got the Force! He'll make a great Jedi!" So, Obi-Wan, in paternalistic mode, takes the kid under his wing, raises him like the son he never had, and starts to train him as a Jedi. Obi-Wan, figuring he's as good as the next little green elf, decides Anakin doesn't need Yoda's training at all. Jump ahead 10 years to the next "episode," and we find that Anakin has become a restless, somewhat rebellious youth. He realizes his potential is great, but Obi-Wan isn't teaching him the really cool skills and tricks as quickly as he would like. So, he meets up with this small-time politician named Palpatine, who totally understands Anakin and cheerfully volunteers to teach him all the good stuff. Ultimately, this will tear Obi-Wan and Anakin apart. Anakin helps Palpatine in his quest for power, Palpatine helps Anakin master the Dark Side. Of course, Anakin won't realize he's riding the Road to Hell until it's too late. Obi-Wan will try to save Anakin, resulting in the famous duel by the lava pits. Anakin becomes Vader, and he goes off to help exterminate the Jedi Order.

I haven't figured how Anakin's wife will fit into all of this. I could be totally wrong. But I think the scenario fits into the father-son conflict cycle that culminates between Vader and Luke later on.

What's fascinating is that George is saying now that the SW saga is ultimately Darth Vader's story, not Luke's. I don't think he originally intended it that way. It's strange how a character can evolve and grow so that he ends up being the true protagonist. Vader is perhaps the most recognizable symbol of SW. His mug has appeared on more SW material than any other character's. I guess it's time the Dark Lord got his due.

