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each SE for your own name among all the LoCs. There are at least two of us. ((Ed: Why do you think I underline names? Everybody scans for their own names first! I underline names to make it easier to find yourself!))

P. S. I do the same with zine LoCs. Is this vanity?

Donna Frayser: I'm looking forward to that call. As for getting online being a help ... my kingdom for a computer and the knowledge to use it!

You asked why fandom seems so fertile for feuds. Of course, Cheree's reply was accurate, but I believe it goes further. Fans seem to be, in general, anyway, passionate people with passionate views who — at least in the earliest stages — must learn to share their passions with others whose slant is slightly (or radically) different from their own. But I firmly believe that tolerance can be learned and that fandom is vastly richer when it is.

To everyone I missed: I hope I saw most of you in Lansing and that we had that usual sleepless, wonderful time. May your summer be warm but not too hot, leisurely but not lazy, and carefree but not careless. Peace to all.

## PLANETARY NEWS

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February 8, 1996

Hi there!

First the Galactic News:

Planet Corellia: Harrison's new movie arrived in Germany in late January — and vanished as quickly as virginity in a Mos Eisley bordello, as seemingly few people went to see it. Highly unusual for a Ford picture. The Filmbewertungsstelle Wiesbaden (a state institution that previews movies, gives them their ratings and speaks out special recommendations pro or contra the feature) has given *Sabrina* the highest recommendation possible, the addendum: "Besonders wertvoll" (extremely valuable/precious). Maybe that was a turnoff to a lot of folks, who assume that a movie with that particular rating is either too intellectual or otherwise boring. I, of course, saw *Sabrina* and it was entertaining enough, tho' I would have preferred a bit more Harrison and a little less Julia O. Now I read that HF has a whole bunch of future projects all lined up (no word on the new Indy yet, tho' he supposedly has the scripts on his desk for evaluation, after Lucas and Spielberg already gave it their ok's). Have you folks seen HF wearing a Thomas Magnum moustache? Looks kinda

cute, but the poor guy is skinny these days. Melissa, quit demanding so much of your hubby. He's burning his calories faster than he can gain 'em.

Planet Tatooine: Mark was on *Jay Leno's Tonight Show* on February 6th, "helping" Jay deliver his "Eerie Similarities". The kid wasn't interviewed, tho' — to my utter dismay.

Harrison fared better in that department when he came to promote *Sabrina* in late December and answered funny questions from the audience ("Which one of your movie partners was the best kisser?" Answer: "Chewbacca!")

Planet Hollywood: The Lucasfilm zine, issue of December 1995, stated that two big cons were planned for 1996. One (general SF con) over at Walt Disney World in Orlando, FL during mid-January (! Now, isn't that good planning... giving notice barely one month ahead of the event). And another one (all SW, and supposedly the *ultimate* SW con) at the "end of the year" in Anaheim, CA. Neat. And so precise. What is the "end of the year"? December? November? Earlier than that? Around Labor Day??? When do they give us the final dates?

They promised "we'll keep you posted". Ha! Like when? It will be very helpful for all non-US/Canadian residents to read in September that the con will be held in mid-October.

I have faxed to the Disneyland hotel (where I suspect the con to take place), but haven't heard anything from them yet. I would yell "shit" if I weren't educated so well.

Now the LoCs:

Jacqueline Taero: I, too have trouble with Leia naming her child Anakin (why??). And especially one should think that the father of the child would have his own p.o.v. on that subject. I simply cannot see Han calling his son Anakin. Han, Jr., yes. Luke, maybe. But Anakin?

Leia's indifference to Alderaan's demise and Bail Organa's death? Hm, difficult. About a year or so ago I watched a TV special on a lady (Erdmute von Zitzewitz) returning for the very first time since the end of WW II to East Prussia (since 1945 part of Russia) to visit the remains of her former home, Gut Weedern, once the largest privately owned horse farm in all of Germany. At the sight of the completely run-down, partially destroyed buildings and overgrown, weedy yard and pastures her face turned to stone. She just stood, tight-lipped, pale, but with a regal stance of inner pride and strength. No tears, no visible emotions. Others would have been overwhelmed with emotional pain, but her upbringing in the traditional "Prussian" way (spartan, almost military in its valuation of pride, duty and self-discipline) did not allow her to give in to her feelings. Therefore, I can only assume that Leia had somewhat of the same upbringing, constantly being told from day 1 on that "first comes Alderaan/the state/the cause ... and you and your own wishes are always dead

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last." But then, maybe she really didn't like Bail Organa?! Only George can clear that up.

Can Luke get ... every once in a while? He could, and we fanfic writers are willing to let it happen (most, anyway), but again, the mastermind behind the madness (GL) wants a monk. So the Skywalker kid remains as untouched as a rabid Rancor. It's not my fault ...

Minky: I am coming to Portland? Are you sure that that is what you wish? Be careful.

Han certainly had surgery at Jabba's, tho' it wasn't exactly a frontal lobotomy. From his actions after the escape from Jabba's barge, I must assume that the part of his anatomy that fell victim to Jabba's knife were his brass b...

On realistic or symbolic standpoint: ok, if Tatooine is the Midwest, then what are all the other places? Alderaan = New England? Hoth = Alaska? Dagobah = Florida? Corellia = Texas? Coruscant = Washington D.C.?

Laura Virgil: Three cheers for the bit on "single = lonely". Couldn't agree more.

Z. P.: The "eleveneses" that planet Hungaria refers to as "ten o'clockers" are called "early piece" (Frühstück) on my ole mothball planet. I'm afraid, tho' that using this term will cause a lot of puzzled faces and scalpscratching amongst my dear readers, so I have to invent something else ("Where's Han?" Lando asked. Luke shrugged: "Went to have an early piece with Leia!")

Wait a second, honey. 1996 is the year of "scum and villiany" at MWC. And 1997 is the year of the "good guys"?! OK, then Han's cabin belongs in the 1996 exhibit, along with Darthie's boudoir, Jabba's commode and Palpie's waterbed.

The kiss between Luke and Leia... Lucas let that slide, because this "incest" both siblings were unaware of their relationship at that point. Since neither one suspected to be related to the other, the kiss was acceptable. Also, this kiss in sick bay was a rather spontaneous reaction to make Han jealous. There was no lust involved (on Leia's side; Luke may have experienced this a little different).

Marlene Karkoska: Ha! Finally another soul who is as puzzled as this ole warrior here about the strange zoology on the SW planets. With their build and hirsute bodies banthas (who bear somewhat of a resemblance to wooly haired mammoths) definitely belong on cool or rather, cold worlds, such as Hoth. On the other hand, Tauntauns, with their not exactly dense fur, thin-rimmed nostrils, almost bare muzzle, thin ears, lofty stance (on two legs, far above the ground) plus long tail look like perfectly adapted to desert life but not to constant sub-zero temperatures. But then: we also see the space-slug and Mynocks living on airless asteroids. Bear with him: George is a movie producer. not a zoologist.

About Kenobi's sacrifice: the usual thing. Ole Ben

taking the easy way out is all. And that smug little smile? He probably was already relishing the thought of leaving father and son to discover some alarming facts of life all by their lonesome. (*Is anyone actually taking me serious here?*)

Debbie Kittle: I hope that by now you've had enough winter to last you for the next 12 months to come. We here have a bit of snow every once in a while, but temperatures are constantly in the cellar with brutal winds out of the east. I've had it with that forsaken cold. Let's have a large helping of springtime here, folks!

Yeah, good old Lando drives me bonkers too with his Haan vs. Han bit. Make up your mind, Calrissian! But it's not just him, others are just as bad. Leia and even Luke can't decide on what they want to call the king of the spacers, either. Since Han introduced himself to Ben and Luke pronouncing his name Haan, I tend to believe that that is the correct way of saying it. Maybe Lando speaks a peculiar dialect. Or maybe he has trouble with Corellian names. And remember: Leia says: "General Ry-kian says..." Uh, Leia ... the man's name is Rieekan, and I would pronounce that "Ry-eekan".

Louise Turner: Can we be sure that the Empire is racist, because all we see (or rather, have been shown yet) is ships full of male, white, middle-aged, human and well educated personnel? Now, it *is* rather odd, I do admit, that there are only white and no young (or very old) men aboard the vessels (at least not in those parts we constantly see, like the bridge). But why do we see no women? OK, here is my (questionable) thesis:

Mixed male/female crews together on one ship would probably cause too much trouble:

(a) there would be considerable detraction from necessary duties by lusty men ogling the she-folks and vice versa.

(b) men and women, equal as they are, still have different ways of approaching problems mentally. Men think different than do women. Have you ever attended an important meeting where men and women tried together to find a solution to a pending problem? A three ring circus. They mean the same thing, but often seem at cross-purposes while arguing the matter. Besides: as we all know, the average male ego does not take criticism or orders given by or in the presence of women all too well. (*Except, of course, our fellow LoCers of S.E. — Had to add that before the boys declare war on me.*)

(c) All ships would need additional medical and hygiene facilities.

And what about other species? I think I did tackle that one already in one of my earlier LoCs, so I only quote Han (aboard the *Tydirium*): "I don't think the Empire had Wookiees in mind when they built her, Chewie!" Imagine Wookiees, Ewoks, Mon Calamari, et cetera, all aboard a

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standardized ship. They would either all have to bring their own ships (like the Mon Calamari) into the battle or face major difficulties trying to adapt to the average Imperial ships.

Therefore, it may be possible that there are Imperial battle units that are entirely female or non-human. Not likely, but possible. (*How come I sound like I'm trying to sanction the actions of the Empire? Hey, it's not my fault. There is a Dark Lord using old Jedi mind tricks on me.*)

Uh, since we're already discussing the Empire ... how come that — with rare exceptions — the men aboard the Imperial vessels all lack in the “looks” department? Doesn't Uncle Palpie have at least one drop-dead gorgeous hunk of male flesh in his entire fleet? (Not since Han left the ranks, huh?!) And why does pro-fiction have it that Boba Fett is ugly as sin? Actually, Jeremy Bulloch is anything but, and I do not see why the antagonist of any story needs to be either horrible looking, bad-mannered, ill-kempt or uneducated.

Someone please stop me before I actually salute the Imperial flag and sign the next war bond to finance the crushing of the rebellion ...

**Maggie Nowakowska:** ... and Cheree: whatever you gals got in mind for the 50th issue of S.E. — count me in. Bios/photos, money — I'll donate anything (except Han Solo's erotic diary that he left on my nightstand earlier this week; but you wouldn't be interested in that one anyway. Right?)

Hey, what a great idea about the Jedi siding with non-Humans... Never thought about that before, but this makes a lot of sense (to me and my twisted mind, certainly not to GL and cohorts).

**Tim Blaes:** A Wookiee in a microwave? It can happen — but only in Texas (or Corellia), where everything is always a bit bigger ...

I recently bought the mentioned pieces of pro-lit, too (yes, I'm a masochist lately) and again do not know whether to say “amen” or unleash the Rancor. The more pro explanations of the SW galaxy I read, the more questions pop up in my sick mind. Seems it has the opposite effect on me than that intended by the writers.

**The Essential (whatever that is) Guide to Characters:** My first grudge is of course that it includes all those “original” characters from the dreaded pro books, most of whom I find as interesting as the growth rate of common moss. And I heartily agree with you on the matter of Mangel's having inserted his own material. My second peeve is that someone out there in pro-land is a bit less than imaginative when it comes to stating a being's height. Is it just me, or has it occurred to anyone else that — with rare exceptions (3PO, Luke), body height is given in plain, roundabout numbers ... preferrably 1.7 meters? Without wanting to sound nitpicky, but a lot of male characters in

the SW movies do look taller than Luke. And if Luke is 1.72 meters (5 ft. 8 in.), then I must question the heights given for all the others. But maybe someone is colporting from German movie magazines, where Harrison Ford's height is usually given as being 1.75 m (5 ft. 9 in.) instead of 1.84 m (6 ft. 1 in.).

Another book that I like a lot better but still not as much as I wish I would is *The Illustrated SW Universe*. It looks terrific, and the authors/artists have mostly been quite imaginative. However, here we encounter again a galaxy full of planets and moons that have one and the same environment all over. Either nothing but desert (ice, sand etc.), or jungle. Or — in the case of Alderaan — grass (how boring ... I had always envisioned Alderaan as a world blessed with great natural beauty). Coruscant turns out to be a nightmare of a planet completely covered with buildings (obviously is the assumption that the core world of something as bad as the Empire must be the ugliest place in the universe). I am just glad they managed to forego Corellia. I would have been heartbroken to find it a brown paperbag floating in space!

*Raiders of the Lost...* AHM! How come I have the feeling West End Games will not be too happy with that one?

Why was it safe to dump Leia on Alderaan? Hm, just think what would have happened had they dumped her on Tatooine! I just cannot imagine her on a sandfarm, repairing vaporators. Although I must assume that, with her tenaciousness and business-oriented mind, she would probably have gotten along better with Uncle Owen than dreamy-eyed, head-in-the-clouds Luke.

You and your crossbreds... Can I have one, too? I want a puppy from the mating of SW and *Simon & Simon*. Lemme rephrase that! (And quick, before Z. P. thinks that this is going to be a contribution to her next issue of *Garbage*).

I just read a short note on colors here in a newsmag. One passage says: “Black erases all colors, this also applies in the fighting sport of Jiu Jitsu. The black belt marks the peak, the end of the career.

HA! Here we go. Replace “black belt” with “black tunic”, replace jiu jitsu with Jedi/Sith ... bingo! One possible explanation why (aside from the obvious “good guys wear white, bad guys wear black” philosophy) the “finished” Jedi-Knight Luke wears black.

OK, enough now. Read you all again next time around in S.E. except Mary Jo Fox who will be sadly missed.

Fly casual...



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## HAD ENOUGH WINTER

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February 13, 1996

Greetings! Sorry, Cheree, I haven't written in a couple of issues, so this might be a long one... Oh, and congratulations on the new house! Before I get into comments, there are two things I'd like to mention. First, some of you may have heard that I've been having some physical problems which began in October. They have finally diagnosed (after my insisting on getting an MRI done when nothing else was conclusive) that I have a herniated disc in my neck, and it is being crushed on the left side, pinching off the C-7 nerve (I was amazed to find out they have the nerves numbered!) which runs from the neck down into the fingers. This explains all the pain I've been in and also the lack of feeling in my left index finger. We've no idea what caused this. But I might require surgery to remove the disc. They are telling me it's an "easy" surgery and I should only be in the hospital a couple of days. And I've had other surgeries done in the past so I'm sort of used to it. Then again, we've all heard horror stories about people having operations on the spinal cord at the base of the neck and ending up paralyzed, so I must say I'm going into this with *much* trepidation. But, I can't just go on with it the way it is, so I guess I just have to brave the surgery. Oh, and at the same time they diagnosed carpal tunnel, although it is a mild case, the doctor says. ((*Ed: Pat, best wishes to you! Keep us posted on how you're doing!*))

Marti Schuller: Sorry to ruin your wish that 1996 will be a healthier year for all of us. Well, technically this began in 1995 and they hope to fix it in 1996, so maybe...

My best wishes to Cheree, Laura Virgil and Wanda Lybarger for the surgeries they've gone through. It's never easy.

OK, now onto something fun. This isn't for anything SW related, *but I'm looking for some good artists*, and I know there are a lot of you who read SE! OK, the project is this: About a year and a half ago I began designing a role-playing game based on the TV series of *Highlander*. I just knew there was a market out there for this. I felt inspired so began work on it right away, and wrote to the producers of the show. Several months later I finally heard back from them and they said they had thought about doing a *Highlander* game and had hired a production company to arrange it. They sent me their address and so I wrote to

them. They in turn informed me, "Thank you but we've already hired a gaming company to produce a *Highlander* game, sorry..." Well, this game turned out to be the *Highlander card* game, which as most of you know is *nothing* like a role-playing game. I've decided I still want to put out my game (of which the writing is finished) but instead of having it produced professionally, I'm going to do it up like a zine and sell it at conventions. It may never happen but my hope is that someday a copy will fall into their hands, they'll like it, and contact me about finally putting it out professionally. (I've been told this happens a lot in the gaming world...) It will be produced at absolutely *no* profit (what zine is?). But it *really* needs artwork and lots of it. I'm looking for 5-10 artists to produce a total of about 50 pieces of art. All artists will get a free copy, of course. If interested, send a SASE for more information on what I'm looking for and for submission requirements. (And if any of you are interested in buying a copy when it's done, send a SASE for a flyer.)

OK, now after that shameless plug, on to comments.

Debbie Kittle: I hope you're happy! Can we pleeeeeeze have Spring now? I've had enough winter for 2-3 years and it hasn't been anywhere near as bad here in Holt (near Lansing), MI as in most of the rest of the country. But the weather out east affects my job (I run trucks out of our plant in Pennsylvania) so when they get bad weather it ruins my day too. Of course, by the time this is printed, it will be Summer (thank the Maker!).

What 3-D Falcon Puzzle?? If anyone can still find one in a store, please let me know and I'll send you money to grab it for me! I can't find it here anywhere (what is TRU?).

Carolyn Golledge: Congratulations! Gee and we can all say we knew you before you were famous!

Jacqueline Taero: You mention that Anakin/Darth supposedly gave Kenobi a lightsaber to give to his son when the child is older, and that this infers that he knew or suspected that Kenobi was aware of the boy's location. If this is true, you're right. But I've just got a feeling that this is another instance of Kenobi "stretching" the truth, as in telling Luke his father was dead. Okay, theoretically Anakin "died" when Vader was "born." I think in the case of the lightsaber, it is probably one left behind by Anakin or perhaps lost at the "volcano" when he "fell in." Kenobi took it into his care, feeling that it should go to Anakin's son. Vader didn't necessarily know anything about it at all. Of course, this is all conjecture, with no facts to back it up. But it does make sense.

I also have a big problem with Leia naming a child Anakin and an even bigger problem with Han going along with it. I could *easily* believe they would name their child Bail (no, you're not the only one to find this omission strange), the only father Leia ever knew, and in his

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memory, since he was murdered by the Empire. Of course, your comments about Leia never showing grief for the loss of Bail do also make sense. But Anakin... No! Maybe, just maybe, Leia may have accepted Anakin's redemption, but I don't think Han ever would and it's his son, too.

In reply to your comment to Gerald Crotty about Gary Kurtz, I wholeheartedly agree! I had the immense pleasure of actually meeting the man at a WorldCon one year. Loved him!

And regarding your *Lord of the Rings* comparisons, I could make a case for Kenobi being Gandalf, meddling and all. After all, didn't Gandalf manipulate Bilbo into his wanderings in *The Hobbit*? And didn't Gandalf have something to do with Saruman? (Of course, it has been a long time since I read it ... about time I picked it up again!)

Matthew Whitney: You mentioned *Lord of the Rings*, too. The 3-in-1 1992 volume is surely a great find, but I'm rather jealous of your leather bound set! I have *The Hobbit* in leather, but not LOTR. Would love to get it!

Regarding your comment to Z. P. Florian about OWK being Master enough to kill Vader, I'm not sure that the fight had anything to do with the level of his skill or with wanting to send Luke the "Run, Luke, run!" message. I think that OWK took on Vader with the sole intention of keeping him occupied and not having a chance to sense Luke with the Force. I think even at Luke's untrained state at that time there still would have been enough for Vader to sense him. And I think his decision to allow Vader to strike him down was just another example of his Mastery at manipulation. He knew that by his being killed by Vader, Luke would rebel against Vader even more than ever. He wanted Luke to *want* to take on Vader eventually. He also knew that by joining with the Force, he could be with Luke at all times, no chance of being separated. Why didn't OWK just kill Vader and be done with him? He probably just felt it wasn't the right time, and that it was something that Luke would have to do himself in order to progress. But I don't think OWK wanted Luke to know Vader was his father. He wanted Luke to kill "Vader", not "Anakin". He knew Luke would not want to kill his own father, no matter what.

Regarding pros whose personalities soured us on their writing... I too have been blessed to have met so many actors and authors who were genuinely pleasant and fascinating to talk to. There is only one whom I have met that soured me to his writing and that was Harlan Ellison. The only words I can use to describe that person are not fit to be printed on this page and I regret ever having to be in the same city with him, let alone the same building or the same room. The most polite thing I can say is that he is the most arrogant, self-centered egotist I've ever had the displeasure of meeting! On the other hand, I've had the *extreme* pleasure to meet Ray Bradbury and I was

impressed with Alan Dean Foster when I met him at a convention 16 years ago. I was gophering for the con and they'd asked me to "bodyguard" Bjo Trimble. I was sitting near her at a table where she was signing autographs. There was one chair in between us. Alan came over and sat in the empty chair to talk with her. But what impressed me was that not knowing who I was at all, he pushed the chair back a ways so that he didn't block me off from Bjo, then he introduced himself, shook my hand, and then proceeded to include me in *their* conversation (which was about business). He was so friendly and open, I liked him immediately. ((Ed: *Two of the nicest Big Names I've ever had the pleasure of meeting were George Takei — of whom not enough good can be said — and Grace Lee Whitney at ST cons in the 70's. I know Grace Lee had a lot of problems later on, but at that time she was open, friendly and interested in everything. I'll never forget going to dinner with her and her husband — in the company of others, not alone — and having a wonderful conversation with her there. One of the most unpleasant Big Names was David Gerrold who evidently was trying to be the next Harlan Ellison. He was so nasty that two ladies, who were assigned to drive him around town and to a TV station for an interview, finally had enough and abandoned him to find his own transportation.*))

To everyone: Just a few things I thought of and wanted to bring up. One is that it is almost a definite thing that the mother of Luke and Leia will be introduced in the new trilogy. I remember an article in the *TV Guide* a few months ago (unfortunately I didn't keep it and don't remember the date) where they interviewed Carrie Fisher. She said that she'd been hired by Lucas to help with the writing of the character of Luke and Leia's mother for the next movie.

Another "tidbit" is that at GenCon last August, the people from West End were giving a talk and they excitedly told us about the time they asked LucasFilm to send the floorplans for something (I think it was the *Millennium Falcon*) to include in their next sourcebook and, when the plans were sent to them, there was an extra set of plans included labeled "Lava City". They got a phone call the day after from LF asking if they'd received the package and, if so, was there something extra enclosed they hadn't asked for, called Lava City. West End told them there was and LF asked them to *please* send them back, poste haste. Hmm... Lava City... You find lava in *volcanos*, right? Hmmm...

And lastly, also at GenCon (did anyone else from SE go?) each year they do Sci-Fi Saturday (it is mainly a gaming con) and this year Mark Hamill was a guest. Gads, it was so exciting to actually see him in person! He gave a wonderful talk and did all his voices for us (including his infamous Joker's laugh), but to me the most interesting

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thing was his discussion on SW topics. I was amazed to hear that he felt similarly to some of us about several things. For one thing, he was not really happy with the third movie. He said that he was scheduled to have lunch with George the day after getting the script to read and his first comment to George was, "What are you trying to do, corner the market on teddy bear sales?" He did not like the Ewoks.

To all the family v. no family for Luke debaters: Sorry, but I have to cast my vote for "no family." I really see Luke as having only one love in his life — the Force, and devoting all his time and energy into training new Jedi and all that. I see him being a loner. I have to agree with Laura Virgil that there's absolutely nothing wrong with being single. Having a family doesn't guarantee a happy old age. Unlike Laura, I do believe in the concept that there is "someone out there for everyone", *but* as crowded as this planet is getting, the chances of finding that someone is getting smaller and smaller and, if you have an entire Galaxy to look through, good luck! And I *hate* to see Luke just settle for anyone. I have to add that while I have my lonely moments, I am *much* happier in my life in general now that I am single again than I ever was when I was married. If you're not married to that one perfect match for you, your married life can become a living hell. I would never wish that on Luke. My advice to Luke is: *Stay single!*

Laura Virgil: I really like your description of why OWK referred to the lightsaber as an elegant weapon. Although personally I don't find them *that* aesthetic, but that's a personal taste thing. But I agree. I am a non-violence person but I love to look at and handle various swords and would give anything to see the ceremonial saber your grandfather had! And it's one reason I enjoy *Highlander* so much. I love looking at that gorgeous katana *almost* (but not nearly) as much as watching Adrian Paul...

Z. P. Florian: Ooops — just noted you had a comment in the last issue almost identical to mine about Vader giving the lightsaber to Kenobi to give to Luke (or rather that he probably didn't). Nice to see we think alike!

You said you love it when we suggest good reads and shows. Well, here's a recommendation from me. Back when I was in high school in the 70's, I read a book called *Time and Again* by Jack Finney. It's a wonderfully romantic quasi-science fiction historical novel, kind of along the lines of H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*. This one, too, deals with time travel, but in a different way. I had lost my copy years ago and it went out of print quickly. I'd nearly forgotten about it until just recently the Quality Paperback Book Club offered it as a new selection (it's back in print!) ... along with a new sequel called *From Time to Time* by Jack Finney. I ordered them, of course,

and just finished reading them and I want more! In the front they list other books by him and under these two titles they also list *About Time* which I'm hoping turns this into a trilogy. *From Time to Time* was published in 1995, so *About Time* could be one that's not actually out yet. I'll be watching for it. Anyway, I *highly* recommend them. Oh, by the way, *Time and Again* takes place in "modern times" (it was written in the 70's) and in the 1880's and *From Time to Time* takes place in "modern times" and in 1910-1911. Both are *packed* full of wonderful photos and drawings of the times. They also deal with theories about trying to change history.

A. G. Steyn: *You tell 'em!!* I guess like most (not all) "typical" people who run things like *official* clubs, *professional* magazines, etc., this guy thinks that after a fan reaches a certain age, they "lose" interest. We're supposed to hit that age 25 and "grow up", and all that. Sheesh, yeah, tell that to the over 25 group in any other fandom, such as sports. Do you think they feel that a 40 year old just shouldn't be sitting in those bleachers, doing the wave, cheering for their team, wearing that team t-shirt and cap (and buttons, socks, shoes, etc.), or collecting those baseball cards and memorizing *everybody's* ERA, and every other tiny piece of information? No, that's acceptable. \*sigh\* I get so tired of that attitude. Well, I'm 42 and perfectly happy to be a *Star Wars* fan, whether he likes it or not! And you're right, *we* are the ones who kept the spirit of SW alive over the last few years. If we hadn't kept up with the zines and clubs, and all that, what would have kept the interest kindled? Grrrrr.....

Marlene Karkoska: I have to agree with you. I don't think we'll meet Luke's "wife" in the next trilogy. How could we — it's a prequel and Lucas has already said that (and sorry, I don't remember where I read this, and I know he does change things a lot) the closest we might come to seeing any of the "Big 3" (Han, Luke and Leia) in the next trilogy is at the end of the third movie we might run into a "ten year old Corellian cabin boy" working for Captain Antilles, and that Luke and Leia's birth will probably be "pending" at the end of the movies.

Louise Turner: Yes, it was a civil war. I don't see how there can be any doubt. After declaring himself Emperor, Palpatine ruled the Galaxy, but he only ruled the exact same government of which he'd been elected President. He changed it from a democratic form of government (or something close to it) into a dictatorial Empire, but it governed the same areas, the same people. It was from these people, now citizens of the Empire, that the Rebel Alliance was formed. Now, I'm sure that since the beginnings of the Empire new worlds were grasped by the Empire, and others joined up with the Alliance, spreading the fight out beyond the initial boundaries, but at the base it is still a civil war.

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If you look in the original *Star Wars* novel, there is a good argument for this being a civil war. *"Aided and abetted by restless power-hungry individuals within the government, and the massive organs of commerce, the ambitious Senator Palpatine caused himself to be elected President of the Republic ... Once secure in office, he declared himself Emperor, shutting himself away from the populace."* It then says, *"Many used the Imperial forces and the name of the increasingly isolated Emperor to further their own personal ambitions. But a small number of systems rebelled at these new outrages. Declaring themselves opposed to the New Order, they began the great battle to restore the Old Republic."* This describes a rebellion from within, which as far as I understand, is what a civil war is.

I fully agree with your interpretation that the Empire believes in human supremacy and domination over all others while the Alliance represents those free-thinkers who believe in human and alien rights alike and are against exploitation. I always thought this was kind of obvious in the movies, but I know I've heard other viewpoints. In *Forces of the Empire*, we've widened the Empire to having *females* in high positions as well, but I fully acknowledge that this is only because a large percentage of role-players are female, some females enjoy playing "the bad guy", and if we said "No Women in the Imperial Forces", we'd have a vastly outnumbered division in the Blaster Battle at MWC!

An interesting side note to this topic... As I was looking through the opening pages of the novelization of SW, I came across a paragraph that would make it look like Palpatine is actually little more than a puppet moving to the strings of his advisors: *"Soon he was controlled by the very assistants and boot-lickers he had appointed to high office, and the cries of the people for justice did not reach his ears."* This seems to imply that their cries for justice may have been listened to, had Palpatine heard what was going on. It then goes on to say: *"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."* Note it says the governors and bureaucrats did this — *not* Palpatine! (And curiously not the Sith or Dark Jedi.) From the first quote, it makes me think that Palpatine knew nothing at all about what was going on. Although Lucas paints an entirely different picture of him by the third movie. I'd like to hear other comments on these quotes.

Also, another side issue of Palpatine that has always interested me: Did Palpatine always look that ugly? Or did the use of the Dark Side of the Force turn him that way? Did he look "normal" when elected to the Presidency?

Maggie Nowakowska and Cheree Cargill: Love your

ideas for the 50th issue. As for raising the money, there are a number of ways, and I don't see a reason why not to do them all. You could put a donation box out at the SE party in MWC and welcome donations through the mail. You could do a special drawing where everyone who sends in a donation gets their name put into a "hat", then you would (probably at MWC at the party or in a future issue of SE), pick a name and the winner would win something nice, like some donated collector item or maybe a free one-year subscription to SE, or something like that. Another idea: why not set up a table for one afternoon (maybe just outside the Cantina) and do a SW bake sale? Members of SE could make candy, cakes, or cookies of SW shapes — I'm sure lots of us have those old cake tins shaped like Vader, Chewie and others, and the plastic candy molds and cookie cutters. We'd bring them to the convention and SE members could donate some time to sit at the table and sell the eatables, with proceeds going to the #50 issue. If by some chance you get more donations than needed, the excess money could either go into the next issue or be donated to some worthy charity in SE's name. I've got lots of ideas on this subject because I've been thinking for a long time of doing something similar with our 100th issue of *Bound by the Force*, which is due out the beginning of the year 2001! Couldn't have timed that better if I'd tried! (*Ed: A bake sale is an interesting idea but to be practical you'd need a local kitchen in which to bake the goodies. I doubt they'd travel well. Maybe we could hold it at YOUR house, since you're just down the road from the hotel, and sponsor the First Annual SE v. FOE Blaster Battle and Bake-Off!*)

I also really like the idea of the Who's Who with pictures, bios, etc. It would be great to learn more about the readers/contributors and get to see the faces of those we've never met. Great idea.

Maggie Nowakowska: I really like your views of the Jedi, especially the idea that aggressive would-be Jedi simply didn't become Jedi, and that possibly many of them did end up becoming Sith. I've thought this very same thing all along.

Regarding the topic of why Luke was raised on Tatooine, I found your comments interesting and have heard many viewpoints on this. I can't help wondering if it wasn't actually something very simple. One possibility is that it was agreed that the best people to raise him were Owen and Beru, and they probably already had the moisture farm going there, this was their home. So there was no choice of where to send him. Another possibility could be the old adage: The best place to hide something is right under their nose. There were obviously Imperials stationed on Tatooine. As remote as Luke felt Tatooine was (haven't a lot of us felt the same way about our own home towns when we've wanted to travel?), there are no



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facts to back up that it was all that remote. Perhaps he was just under their noses and they never knew it.

You mentioned the movie *Hidden Fortress*. I've never heard of it and you've peaked my interest. Do you have a copy of the original version? I'd love to get a copy, so if you do, can we work a deal?

Please pass on a hearty congratulations to Susan Matthews for selling 2 novels to Avon Books!

I also found it interesting that Lucas pronounces it H-short a-n like Lando. But that's OK. I always felt that the reason there was a difference in pronunciation could be explained simply as differences in accents (you say potAto, I'll say pot-ah-to...). I can readily accept the fact that H-short a-n is the *correct* pronunciation, while I speak it with the accent. I guess I've pronounced it H-ah-n so long now, it just doesn't sound right to me the other way.

John Fredericks and Nora Meyers: Swarsies? Swarsers? UGH! But I have to admit the only term I can think of is "Star Wars Fans"... hmmm ... SWans? (Ed: But is that SW-short a-ns or SW-ah-ns?)

Nora Meyers: What a shock! I was reading my copy of SE the day I received it and I came across your letter mentioning what a fan you are of Gene Kelly. And yes, if SW had been done a few decades ago (I shudder to think of it done with those tacky 50's sci-fi flick effects...), I could very easily see Gene Kelly playing the part of Han. I'm also a big fan of his, by the way, although I'm a big fan of that era in general. My favorites are Gene Kelly, Danny Kaye, and Bing Crosby.

Anyway, the shock came when, the very next day, I heard the news of Gene Kelly's death. I immediately thought of you. So I'm sending you a long-distance, in print, hug — with condolences from a fellow fan.

Cheryl Pryor: I also have always believed that Palpatine manipulated Anakin into the Dark Side. I don't think there's really any facts to back this up, but just looking at the two together, there just seems to be something a lot more personal about Vader's subservience to Palpatine and the Emperor's orders to Vader than just that of Emperor and subject.

Tim Blaes: GROAN!! Chia Bantha or Chia Vader? (Why not a Chia Wookiee?) Hey, Cheree, here's another project for you to raise money for #50!

A crossover between Trek and Oz? How about SW and Oz? I've got a play I've been kicking around for a few years now that someday I might just write and do at MWC. Some of it was actually written at one point but I can't find the notes now. Leia wakes up one day and finds herself and R2, not at the New Capitol for the New Republic, but rather on Earth at a science fiction convention in Wichita, Kansas. One of the best lines I remember was when Darth Vader (actually a fan dressed up like Darth) who is upset with Leia because she accidentally knocked a piece off his

costume, says to her, "I'll get you, my pretty — and your little droid, too!" And then there's the song the convention-goers sing to Leia: "We welcome you to Wichita, fa la la la la la la la la la la..." I won't tell anymore 'cause if I ever do get this thing written, I don't want all the good lines spoiled!

You also mentioned *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*. While I agree it does need some fixing, I have to say that I enjoyed the book when it came out and I still do. I think it's a good story. I like the ideas you have for "fixing" it. Hey, there you go, Tim. Why don't you write it? If we won't ever see it in "professional" print, I'm sure there are any number of zines who would grab it up in a minute, including *Imperium!* By the by, did you know that there's a comic book mini-series of this story?

To everyone: Well, I'm finally ending this letter. I've missed joining in these pages and look forward to the next issue.

MASTER SWORDMAKER

Matthew Whitney  
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March 29, 1996

Congrats, Cheree, on the upcoming move. It sounds exciting and like you and the family are looking forward to it. We'll expect pictures and details on how everything is settling in. And may it be a stress-free move (if that is possible)! I've a "move from hell" story I won't burden anyone with, involving the last time I helped my brother move. Suffice it to say, the only thing that didn't go wrong was the weather. My advice, Cheree, start packing now.

You mentioned a possible price hike for SE. Put me on record that any price policy that's reasonable, that keeps the zine on its feet, is fine by me. I buy because I love it, not because it fits the budget. For the \$ you charge, the hours spent reading and writing new LoCs make this a bargain.

Jacqueline Taero: Did Anakin/Darth leave a saber only for his son and not one for the twin? Good observation! Maybe Luke's ROTJ saber came from Anakin's belongings, rather than being built by Luke, himself. Also, has anyone ever written a story about a possible Wayland-like master sword-maker, whose sole occupation was building sabers for other Jedi? It seems like a fertile topic.

On whether Leia ever grieved over Bail Organa's death: I imagine the fanfic from ANH to TESB was full of it. True, we get little on the screen, but perhaps that is due to



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Lucas' stoic style. Recall how he allowed Mark Hamill a crying take over the deaths of Owen and Beru, but put the restrained scene of his reaction into the final cut of the film.

Also, the rebellion is probably full of individuals with tales of suffering and woe that led them to join the fight against the Empire. As a symbol of the resistance, Leia probably adopts the role of lead by example. Rather than wallowing in grief and self-pity, she gets on with the job at hand — a business first mentality, before every corridor is filled with rebels crying their eyes out over the burdens they all are carrying. In the privacy of her quarters, out of the eyes of others, she probably releases it. Does this sound like a typical “male” attitude? Consider who wrote the saga and who's writing this LoC. Stereotypes are often justly earned. If the scene of Leia being stiff-upper-lipped (“We have no time for our sorrows”) doesn't seem real to the character or the situation, as well as being an ineffective way to deal with grief, then perhaps the scene reveals more about the writer than the character. (The prof of the English course I'm taking now would probably call this “biographical fallacy,” interpreting a piece as a reflection of the author — but I covered my tail by saying this is only a possibility.)

Laura Virgil: Where was I when ANH opened? Fifteen years old, half-way through high school, and growing away from the childhood chums (who were all off to different HSs). I'd always been a fan of SF, especially media, but had no connections other than the friends I chose shared that interest (though most were beginning to look at it as kid stuff where I thought there was even more to it). When SW opened, billed as the ultimate SF film, I had to see it — but waited for the lines to die down. In those days, even seeing movies at anywhere but the third run neighborhood theater 75¢ Saturday matinee was a major step. So, I caught it with my brother during a sparsely attended supper-time show ... and the rest is history. The core of friends I have now began with people I knew casually in high school, but when we found our common interest in SW we became true soul-mates.

Laura, your hesitation over *Toy Story* struck a common cord with me. I haven't seen it either, mostly because of my feeling that computer animation is rather cold, as compared to handpainted cells. (And I'm the one who keeps saying computers are the wave of the future for receiving info — yes, I do see the double standard.) An analogy that struck me is that handpainted cells are the illuminated manuscripts of medieval times, while computer images are mass-market printed paperbacks. The former are a more “elegant” art form, but are the product of a time not to be recaptured.

Debbie Kittle: Hallmark puzzle? Did you misread my LoC (or did I have a typo)? I was praising the 96 calendar,

but a 3-D *Falcon* puzzle sounds neat!

Maggie Nowakowska: Your idea for us LoCers to do “something” for Cheree to celebrate issue 50 is terrific, as are Cheree's plans for the issue itself. Count me in! ((*Ed: I want to restate that this was Maggie's idea. I have not solicited anything in regards to this project.*))

Ben may have been pissed off at Luke when he sent him to Yoda. His tone can be read as sort of “If I've told you once, I've told you 1000 times...” My take on the dialog, however has always been more from the side of Ben giving Luke something to focus on, to keep him alive and moving toward his destiny. “You WILL go to the Dagobah system . . . you WILL learn from Yoda.” [My emphasis.] It was a “do or do not,” approach. Ben didn't merely “want” him to go to Yoda — he told him he “would” go. He made the instruction an unbreakable command, something Luke's mind could focus on to keep it alive.

A race of Dagobytes rather than a solitary Yoda, sure, why not? We cannot presume they do not exist just because we haven't seen them. In all our musings about the Saga, I guess we're like archaeological researchers, trying to reconstruct the entire culture of a lost people from some bones and pottery scraps, with the scant six hours of canonical films serving as our only base to build our extrapolations on, that and our imaginations.

Restored footage in classic films: I'm reminded that I own the classic *Frankenstein* and *King Kong* tapes. With both films, the originals were edited to remove scenes that were considered too horrific/immodest for public viewing. In my tapes, these scenes have been restored, and I consider them the “canon” versions, despite the fact that they are not the versions I first embraced and grew to love. (More double standard on my part?)

John Fredricks: Seems like we hit right near the same mark in responding to why Yoda held off teaching Luke (only Imperial stormtroopers are so precise... !:-)). As a fellow teacher, you in HS Chemistry, me in HS Business & Math — do you have any SW ties? My Vader TIE fighter tie is a student favorite.

Tim Blaes: I'm usually not one for crossovers, but *SW/Voyager* sounds promising. Stylistically, the ship would fit nicely among the Mon Calamari fleet.

As for scanning SE's pages to see if anyone mentions your name, I'm guilty as well. I must confess to a degree of vanity to see if anyone finds my stuff at all interesting ... or a load of crap. But also, I want to see if I need to address any particular comments to people who took the time and care to point out something in my previous LoC. I hate not replying to everyone who mentions something I wrote, but I hold off to save Cheree the need to print an issue full of “thanks for enjoying my comment on this ridiculously unimportant item of trivia.” If anyone feels

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I've ignored something you wanted to continue debating, don't rely on subtle hints to this dimwit. I often must be stoutly buffeted with a quarterstaff!

The "scanning" of SE is a regular ritual, as usually I've a dozen things going on when an issue arrives. I find it impossible to read SE without a note pad to begin my next LoC, much like one would read an important reference for a college course. Notes are jotted down, passages referenced, all the preparations one makes for a legitimate research paper. Thus the reason I was absent for a string of issues, when I couldn't muster the time needed to devote to each issue. Now, I'm if anything even busier than ever, but I can prioritize better.

Keep the Force alive!

### JOINED THE COMPUTER AGE

Marlene Karkoska  
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April 6, 1996

Hello, Everyone! Well, I finally broke down and joined the computer age! I bought a computer the last day of 1995, and I love it! This is my first computer-generated LoC. It certainly is a *lot* easier to do them this way than to do them by hand. (... And to think that I went all through high school, college, and graduate school without even knowing how to type! It used to take me as long to type my term papers as it did to research and write them!) I'm sure you're delighted too, Cheree! As I remember, years ago I often sent you *very* lengthy, hand-printed LoCs that you then had to type! I'm sure that wasn't much fun! I now have an e-mail address too. (I tried the Internet for the first time last week, and I sent my first piece of e-mail!). I would enjoy hearing from all of you. I love it when the little computer voice announces: "You have mail!" My address is: [Marlenejk@AOL.com](mailto:Marlenejk@AOL.com).

Congratulations on your new house, Cheree! It looks lovely! May you and your family share many happy times in it! Enjoy!

I was very sorry to hear about the death of Brian Daley. I did not know that he was ill and his death came as kind of a shock. I was lucky and won autographed versions of his SW and TESB books that contain the scripts of his radio adaptations. They arrived two days before my surgery in October. When I sent him a card to thank him, I told him that I was looking forward to reading them during my convalescence. After I returned from the hospital, another

package arrived from Mr. Daley. He had sent me another book to read while I was "on the mend". I thought that was very nice of him. After all, I was a stranger to him. He never hinted that he was ill himself. I'm glad that he was able to accomplish his goal of completing the radio versions of the trilogy before his death. I heard that he died the day after the ROTJ radio play was finished.

I enjoyed *Shadows of the Empire*. I thought that the characterizations were done well. Now we know what Luke and Leia were doing between TESB and ROTJ, and we now know why there was a time gap between the two films. Do you think that this book now joins the "canon" material (films, novelizations, radio adaptations)?

On the other hand, I thought *Before the Storm* was really *awful!* When did Leia get to be so unpopular? Leia did not seem to be in character either, and Luke's characterization was *terrible!* I can't imagine Luke leaving his responsibilities to become a hermit. Having a thirty-something Jedi pining away for a mother he never knew was ridiculous, and having him wear a patchwork robe with even bits of a pilot's uniform in it, was downright silly, IMHO anyway! Once again, he certainly didn't behave like a Jedi Master and he seemed very immature. Who picks these authors anyway?!!

Jacqueline Taero: I'm almost positive that Vader did not know he had a daughter until the end of ROTJ. He seemed genuinely surprised when he said to Luke: "So you have a sister! Obi-Wan was wise to hide her. Now his failure is complete!" As for whether he knew he had a son, I'm not as sure about that. However, I tend to think he didn't know until after the events of ANH. Since we learned about Luke's parentage in TESB, I have always interpreted Kenobi's line about the lightsaber to mean that Ben assumed that Anakin Skywalker would have wanted his son to have his saber if he had been himself and had not been lost to the Dark. Maybe the day Anakin made his saber, he made a comment to Obi-Wan about planning to pass on his saber to the son he hoped to have one day. Kenobi may have used that as license to tell Luke that his father wanted him to have it when he was old enough.

I found your idea about a wrongly accused Anakin to be quite interesting and very plausible. As you said, "Hurt, bewildered, and angry" over being falsely accused, he *would* have been a prime candidate for conversion to the Dark "with a little help from Palpatine." Good story material!

I agree with you! Anakin would have been the last name Leia would have wanted to name her child! I would have thought that she would have been more inclined to name her son Chewbacca than Anakin! I also agree that it is very puzzling why she would not have named one of her children after Bail Organa. Maybe your theory *is* correct! Maybe Leia and Bail *didn't* get along! Now, that would

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*really* make an interesting story! (What would have caused the rift between the two?! I would really *love* to see someone tackle this tale!) If Leia didn't want to name her child after her foster father, I would have thought she would have preferred to name him after her brother rather than her father.

M. J. Mink: Well, I still don't think we quite agree about Luke, but I did chuckle over your comment about him: "Luke was the distracting chickadee that allowed the dog to pounce on the mesmerized cat." This brought a very funny image to my mind. It's too bad I don't draw very well. I think it could make a good cartoon...

You have an interesting theory: that Yoda might have known that Anakin would fall to the Dark but let it happen because it was Anakin's destiny to become part of the Dark, so that he could eventually defeat the Dark's agent, Palpatine. I suppose it *is* possible! However, if so, how awful that Vader and his followers had to destroy the entire Jedi order to ultimately get rid of one man. It seems like a very high price for the Galaxy to pay! If the other Jedi knights had not been betrayed and murdered, I would think that they would have eventually found a way to eliminate the Emperor. (Hopefully, without the loss of the entire Order.)

Laura Virgil: Welcome back, Laura! I'm one of the "old timers", and I remember you very well! I have only recently rejoined SE myself.

You and I are in full agreement about the Solo kids! They *don't* talk or act like real children. They *are* obnoxious!

I also agree that the fact that Kenobi was the friend of Luke's father was probably the most powerful reason that Luke was willing to listen to him and follow him. However, I disagree that Luke knew about Kenobi's "grandiose reputation" before he spoke with him in Kenobi's hut. If you remember, Luke told Threepio that Kenobi was "... kind of an old hermit that lives beyond the Dune Sea." Hardly sounds like a grandiose reputation!

Z. P. Florian: I don't understand how anyone can "...make a trilogy that ends with the hero falling to the Dark Side" either! I think a good part of the reason that the original *Star Wars* and the first trilogy were so successful was that they had a happy, upbeat ending. The audience could leave the theater with a good feeling and with the knowledge that good had triumphed over evil. They could leave with a light heart humming John Williams' wonderful music. Perhaps the reason that TESB was the least commercially successful of the three films (even though it was well-made), was that it was missing that feel-good ending that the other two had. If Lucas is planning to make a trilogy of depressing movies, I don't think they will be well received. People went back to see ANH again and again because they *enjoyed* it. They aren't going to go

back repeatedly to get depressed. The real world can make them depressed for free!

I also agree with your comments to Matthew Whitney about special effects. For me, it's the story and characters that are paramount. The special effects are the least important part of a film for me. It's true that they can enhance the look and enjoyment of a good film, but if the story and characters aren't interesting and engaging, all the greatest special effects in the universe won't save the movie. I think that the special effects in ANH are just fine!!! I would like to see the Biggs scenes someday though. I think those would add to the story. Do you think Lucas might someday be willing to sell a video version of ANH with the Biggs scenes included?

I hope M.J. Mink takes you up on your offer to write a story together! I would *love* to read the end result! It would be interesting to read a story where Luke was raised as a Prince of Alderaan and Leia was raised on Tatooine. Having each of you concentrate on a different character and then combine the stories would be great! I hope that you will illustrate it. I'd really enjoy seeing Luke dressed as Alderaan's Prince! How about it, Minky, is it a deal?

Z. P., I'm also in full agreement with you in your comments to Gerald Crotty. I too am sure that Luke and Leia were not originally meant to be brother and sister, let alone twins!

Mary Jo Fox: Oh, say it isn't so, Mary Jo! I enjoy your usually upbeat, positive letters! You always have great ideas! I hope you will change your mind about not writing any more LoCs! You will be greatly missed! I'm glad that at least you will continue to write and publish in the SW universe. Good luck with your pro efforts, and I still hope to see a LoC from you in SE #45!

Matthew Whitney: You asked when Luke should have been told the truth about his parentage. I still think that Yoda and Ben should have told Luke when he first arrived on Dagobah, before he began Jedi training. If they weren't willing to tell him then, at least he should have been told before he left to try to rescue Han and Leia. (...and I feel that if he wasn't prepared to tell Luke the whole truth, Ben shouldn't have told Luke that his father had been a Jedi Knight. He set Luke up for an even harder fall by giving the young man an even loftier image of his father. Ben would have been better off saying nothing about Luke's father at all.)

Debbie Kittle: You're right: The *Illustrated SW Universe* is beautiful! Although the new mastheads are nicely done, I too miss the old ones. Maybe it's possible that the old ones can reappear from time to time. What do you say, Cheree? It would be especially nice to have the old cover masthead in the 50th issue. ((Ed: I never intended to fully retire the old mastheads. They'll pop up now and then.))

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Louise Turner: Did you finish your thesis? I hope so, because then you'll have more time to write Wedge and Luke stories! You really do a much better characterization of Wedge than they do in the X-wing novels or comics, in my opinion. Of course, I also miss Luke in the pro Wedge stories. I like the relationship between the two of them, and I like stories in which they work together. Keep writing!

Maggie Nowakowska: I think it would have been very easy for Imperial propaganda to have been spread throughout the Galaxy, even to remote planets *because* of the technology. While I was in college, I took biology for several quarters. We had labs that had only about 15 students, but we had lectures in a huge auditorium where 350 people were present. Some of these lessons were televised and sent to several other lecture halls when an important guest speaker arrived. I could easily see where a given subject could be taught to classes on 100 or even 1000 worlds at a time by beaming an instructor's lesson (or a propaganda tape) throughout the galaxy. Our technology today is pretty amazing. It is making our world seem like a much smaller place. The technology of the SW galaxy seems much more advanced than our own. I don't think it would be hard for the Empire to make its presence felt on many worlds. I think they would be sure to start their propaganda with the younger students too. Young children are very impressionable, after all.

Cheryl Pryor: I'm glad you liked my idea about Tarkin as Palpatine's little brother. No, I haven't written a story about it. You're welcome to try to write one if you wish! Unfortunately, I'm not a SW author. (...and I only write stories for children anyway.)

I agree that Jedi powers don't necessarily have to be used solely in military applications. As you probably noticed in my LoC last issue, I too think that there can be Jedi in almost any occupation.

John Fredericks: Thanks for the support in my "Luke as a family man" crusade! I'm glad to hear that someone else feels that Luke deserves to have a family. I wish more people felt that way! (...particularly some of the pro authors. I'd love to see one of them take a chance and give lonely, long-suffering Luke a wife and kids!)

I'm not sure though that we know that Luke was raised by relatives. We do know that Owen was Ben Kenobi's brother, but we don't yet know for certain that Luke was actually a blood relative of either Owen or Beru Lars. (At least, I don't *think* we know that. Did I miss something? It's entirely possible!) If Luke is really related to Owen, then he and Leia are related to Ben too. I think Luke may end up being Ben's grandson (his mother's father). Perhaps Luke and Leia's maternal grandmother was related to Bail Organa.

I'm in *complete* agreement with you: NO MORE

DEATH STARS!

Tim Blaes: Your ideas about the time travel stories are very good. I would enjoy reading both of them. Your story idea about Leia sounds like it could be very serious and very sad, but it is intriguing. Your story idea about the children seeing their mom, dad, and uncle when they were very young sounds like it could be a great comedy! When are you going to start writing them?

I don't want Lucas to "fix what isn't broken" either. I still say the only scenes that should be added are the Biggs scenes. I wish Lucas would spend more of his time and money on new films instead of on redoing films that are already classics. I really want to see the sequel films someday, but he'll never get to those until the prequel films are finished. It seems that the date for the release of the first prequel film keeps getting pushed back. Now I hear 1999...

Wonderful question: "If the SW saga is ultimately Darth Vader's story, what role *can* he play in the 'last trilogy'?"! Exactly! Maybe he comes back as a "ghost" like Ben Kenobi and trains his grandchildren! ( Maybe I shouldn't give George Lucas any ideas!)

Well, this LoC is again longer than I intended! For those of you who will be attending MediaWestCon: Have a *great* time! Good luck to all of the authors and artists and zine eds when the STAR aWARDs are given out! I appreciate everyone's efforts! May you all continue to write and draw in the SW universe for many, many years to come!

Have a wonderful summer!

SW AT NORWESCON - SEATTLE

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June 5, 1996

Good lord. I certainly didn't expect to get an big, yellow envelope from Judy Yuenger in the mail! Gosh. Thanks all, for the Honorable Mention for SW filks! 'Tis deeply appreciated out here in the wilds of the great western Northwest.

As for the last SE, I really thought I was in a pickle. That big yellow envelope arrived just before all the OT at work hit this spring. Noting the long lead time, I carefully put the issue aside, in a very safe place, to await a break in time to answer it. Then, when that break hit, I couldn't find the bloody thing! Was frustrated for days, and that wasn't

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good. After 6 months of massive OT, and I mean gonzo OT, I needed some diversion. Finally, a few days later — ah! I found my issue! Piled under some story binders that also got put away for lack of time. Whew.

I hope everyone at MWC packed good vibes into the walls of the hotel for next year; Susan and I intend to be there in '97. We did make it to Norwescon this year (the NW regional con) and caught a great SW show by Steve Sansweet of LF. He not only showed clips and film from the various *Shadows of the Empire* products, from book to Nintendo game, but we also got to see in-work film clips and recorded satellite feed discussions between GL and the crew working on the reworked rereleases due out next February and March. An extra bonus was the showing of the trailer provided for theater buyers — the local concomm managed to get its hands on a 35 mm projector, not something available to every con this year, I'm told — and that trailer was a lot of fun. It even jazzed up those of us present who hadn't been too keen on reworking the films.

(Some of this may be old news by the time this gets printed, but I'll include it for historical purposes, if nothing else. At least we'll have a record of some of what was said when.)

An interesting bit: at the presentation Sansweet mentioned that we would now see that Greedo fired first in the cantina. Our section of the audience wasn't terribly impressed with that news and when Sansweet was on the GENie RTC in May, I asked about it. He replied that the notion *is* controversial and may not occur; the decision is still up in the air. Those of us on the RTC encouraged him to report back that the notion was not thought well of in at least one corner of the galaxy. We wanted our Han left ambiguous, especially at the beginning.

So, although I like the movies well enough just as they are, I am intrigued by many of the improvements. We'll see a Jabba a couple years younger than ROTJ and more mobile. We'll see a much busier Mos Eisley, with a great new dino-type animal. At the end of ROTJ, there'll be a shot of the galactic center reacting to Palpatine's death.

Gerald Crotty: Sansweet said that the most new minutes will be in ANH, with the least in TESB. He also confirmed that the Biggs footage will not be incorporated into the movie. Apparently, GL still feels that footage slows the movie down and distracts from the subsequent story.

Regarding the new movies, on the RTC, Sansweet reported that the first draft of the first movie, Episode I, is completed, and that the story arc for all three movies has been written. The casting crew is out looking for actors to play a young teen Anakin and a young woman of similar age. If I remember correctly, the first movie occurs when Anakin is a young teen and OWK is in his thirties. The second movie has Anakin a couple years older; the third has him about the same age as Luke in ANH. Also,

according to Sansweet, we'll see Palpatine's machinations as they develop over that same time period.

To the letters:

Laura Virgil: Thanks for your artistic insight on the "elegant weapon" argument. I hadn't thought of it that way before and you do have a very good point. My small knife collection is based on both utility and beauty. (And the reason it's small is that I realized early on that I could never afford the beautiful knives I wanted, and so didn't get into serious collecting. Sigh.)

Your comment on not posting show art that you know won't sell is well taken. I've been there — all the carting and hanging and paperwork of fantastic art from friends who are professional illustrators, but — either the subject matter wasn't popular that year, or it wasn't portrait art of the right characters, or the people who like that sort were clearly not the people with money. Added to the physical hassle and the worry over other people's art was the heartbreak/embarrassment of having to cart it all back and explain that it didn't sell.

On the issue of the rereleased Saga, the #65 issue of *CINEFEX: the journal of cinematic illusions*, carried an interview with Lucas in which they asked him:

"On your special edition, do you expect any backlash from fans who might resent your tampering with a classic?"

His answer: "I don't know. It's my classic. On the one hand I'm doing this, while on the other I'm on the Artists Rights Board, a foundation that's trying to protect films from being changed — which I feel very strongly about, because with the technology we have today, anybody can go back and do this kind of thing. I can sort of see the future, and I want to protect films as they are and as they should be. I don't want to see them colorized, I don't want to see their formats changed. I don't want to see them rereleased, and I don't want to see what I'm able to do now, which is add more characters and do all kinds of things that nobody even contemplated before.

"What I'm doing [with SW], I think, is what a lot of painters do and some writers do — which is to go back and repaint or rewrite. Go into any artist's studio and you'll find lots of paintings on the wall that look completely finished and completely fine. And the artist will say, 'Well, I'm leaving them there because I'm not happy with them.' If I had been an artist and a painter, and I had done STAR WARS, I would have probably left it on the wall, because I wasn't happy with it, even at the time. Everybody else was saying: 'This is great! Didn't it turn out great?' And I would say: 'No. I had to compromise. It didn't turn out the way I wanted it. It fell short of what I wanted it to be.' And they would say 'What are you talking about? You must be nuts!'

"Well, now they're going to find out what I was talking

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about. Finally they're going to see what it was that bugged me so much — because now I can have it be exactly the way I wanted it to be. Well, maybe not a hundred percent. But it went from being what, in my mind, was maybe 60 or 70 percent of what I wanted, up to now being about 93 or 94 percent of what I wanted it to be."

Earlier in the interview, Lucas was quoted: "We have a new Jabba the Hutt that's so much better than the old one I had to work with. I mean, that one wouldn't act! It was just a big old rubber thing. But now I've got one that's very articulate. Its speech is fantastic — the lip-sync is great. The tongue is great, the eye movement — everything! And he walks, too... We're doing the new films, and it's like: *"Gosh, I can have Yoda walk. I could never have Yoda walk before. And, you know, I don't have to stage scenes around R2 and 3PO anymore. I can actually make them more facile. And other characters — I can create characters that don't have to be people in suits."* That's where the real thrill of it all comes. That's what's bringing me back to doing it, in a way — just the fun of it."

Back to Maggie. It's an interesting situation, isn't it? As you said, many of us wince to think of past production, no matter how much friends and fans tell us they loved the story/art. And, certainly, over the centuries, artists have often redone work, even destroyed previous work that had been accepted and respected. Perhaps it's because making movies is such a new art — and is an art that hits many people first on a visceral level — that we react badly to having our beloved pictures change. Or, at least some of us do. There is, after all, a huge market for colorized films and plenty of people out there to laugh at those who complain about that.

(And it's clear that when Lucas talks about improving the movies, he's talking about production values, presentation, the craft of the movie, not about rewriting storylines, characterizations, or such. He wants to accentuate the "feel" of the universe, not the plotting of his story.)

Oh, Laura, the question of Han's presentation in ROTJ deserves a ramble through old SEs. Can you find someone to borrow some from? You'll find a wealth of arguments! And believe me, your feelings predominate. For me, the last kiss worked just fine in context. In a different movie, with a different focus, I can see a more involved embrace, but the tone of ROTJ moved too fast and was definitely geared toward that action. I honestly can imagine lots of young voices moaning, *Aw, Here comes the mush!* if the camera and the actors had lingered. But, then, I read the H&L romance much more astringently than many fans do; I see them both as pretty cut-to-the-action people. For me, personally, to kiss more passionately in the circumstances and open company would have been out of character.

Those two never seem to give away more about themselves than they have carefully calculated they have to.

Jacqueline Taero: Actually, I thought it was pretty clear in ROTJ, when Vader reacted to Luke's thoughts on Leia, that Vader was ignorant of the news that a sister existed. *"Sister? You have a twin sister?"* sounds surprised to me. Which knocks out the "he knew about the girl, too" theory and could lean the argument back toward Vader not knowing about either kid.

As for Mom's politics, my prejudice is to have her involved in reform politics that, for whatever reasons a person might like to posit, go wrong and end up with Palpatine taking over. Maybe the reformers were a bit too hasty, maybe too blood-thirsty, maybe too naive or just too damn stubborn; maybe their reforms weren't as well-founded, or as new & improved as they imagined; maybe they were so fractionalized that Palpatine's forcefulness seemed a beacon of unity in the mess. This way, you don't have to paint Mom absolutely one way or the other, and can leave her frustrated by the nastiness that came along with Palpatine's strength and seductions. She can certainly feel wronged and betrayed, but her involvement in every thing that led up to the disaster would not paint a picture of saintly, wronged virtue. After all, isn't Totally Nasty just as much a cartoon figure as Totally Saintly? Why indulge in either?

Nora Mayers: Absolutely, Gene Kelly always played a very Han Soloish character; after all, Han was the only "modern," and very American, character in the Saga.

Marlene Karkoska: Regarding a woman for Luke, there are times, when I'm feeling really cranky, that I'd love for Luke to come home with someone who puzzles all the home folks, someone who obviously pleases — clearly, unquestionably pleases Luke, but who leaves everyone else, well, polite but not indifferent. Oh, she'd be a decent enough person — I'm not positing any darkside counterpart or strange character — but rather, someone with whom he apparently communicates with very well and who clearly inspires affection in him ... but someone who Leia finds impenetrable and who Han finds the antithesis of sexy. Someone who carries on with her own business and friends and interests which just happen to have very little to do with Han or Leia or anyone else of the revolutionaries. Maybe she's a professor in biology, or ancient literature, or a businesswoman. She's civil and social and courteous and Luke loves her and doesn't care that his "family" doesn't understand/is bored by her. In a way, I'm thinking of my sister-in-law who is a dear sweet woman, a wonderful mother, a great wife for my brother who loves her ... and someone with whom I can barely carry on a 10 minute conversation simply because we have very little in common, and that which we do — the family — we are interested in in totally different ways. Nancy's sweet!

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Nancy's wonderful! Nancy lives on another planet than I do!

And sometimes, yes, I'd like to see Luke bring home someone like Nancy, just to get away from all the cliches and assumptions about proper partners for Jedi and heroes.

Just call me a romantic....<g>

Re: the Jedi in all walks of life. I've always felt it would be so and perhaps that's why one aspect of the pro books, the seeming mystification of the Force and Jedi, bothers me. Personally, I can see the "active" Jedi being simply the obvious end of the philosophy ... and the ones who got cut down as the superstructure of the philosophy. Other people who before identified themselves with the Jedi might just quietly delete that line on the business cards, you know, "*Following the firmest principles of the Jedi Way in all our dealings!*" Then, when the danger had passed, the influence might become more obvious again. This is not to imply cowardice, but to recognize that lots of belief systems maintain through good and bad by nestling in the everyday life of everyday people who have little patience or time for the grand posturings of the Other Classes. "Homely magicks" have long existed and in the late 20th century, people started talking openly about them again, whether in pagan terms, in herbal terms, or ecological terms. The Force is the Force, whether celebrated by the Jedi or demonized by Palpatine; it won't go away when different terms are used.

Lots of talk/speculation about Anakin in this issue. With the reports coming out of LF these days, I suppose we all can begin to fine-tune our guesses on plot development for the first trilogy. Now that it has been announced that Anakin is Luke's age in the third movie, maybe we'll get a more definite idea of Luke's age in ANH. That would be nice. I've heard complaints from a number of areas on the idea of Anakin being so young when he goes darkside. It seems that Lucas is sticking to his interest in the Saga being a story of choices for young adults. I haven't decided what I think on the issue yet; for me, a lot will depend on what kind of life/background the characters is presented with in the movies. And what kind of assumptions are made about the mind-set of such a young man. (I certainly can't claim to first hand knowledge of being 18 and male! My very gentle brother assures me that such creatures are Extremely Volatile and simply assume they know every answer to everything in the world; if even my brother felt that way at 18, well, I'll wait for further male opinion on the matter!)

I'm certainly very curious to see how Lucas presents the relationship between Anakin and OWK, considering the comment that they were "good friends." (Just to set my stance *vis a vis* the OWK Lies About Everything position: I heard the line delivered as an aside, almost a comment for OWK by OWK alone, and not necessarily for Luke's

benefit.) For myself, having had friends 20 years older than myself from teenage years on (and not family friends, but people with whom I established friendships on my own, through common outside interests), the description of OWK and Anakin as having been friends as well as teacher and student seems normal enough. But, I can see how people who did not have the experience of friendship outside their peer group might have problems with that relationship.

Anywho, so far we have a young warrior and an older warrior, a mentor and a student. Having Vader come out of a very young man, just at the very beginning of his adult years, can support the idea of Anakin as young genius; also, the idea of Anakin as someone out on his own at a young (too young?) age. Or, given that backward planet boys fly their own planet-hoppers in this universe, Anakin might just come from someplace where in your late teens you can become a pilot. There's the other extreme, of course, that Anakin is a young man of means with a superb education gotten early, but then, wouldn't he have also come to the attention of the Jedi earlier ... or did the wars provide the opportunity of isolation that allowed OWK his experiment in training that failed so badly?

Still on the subject of Anakin and OWK — Oh god, here I go again, feeling like odd-woman out — I cannot for the life of me see how the only interpretation of "your father wanted you to have this [light saber]" is a lie. Are my friends the only ones who sat around, speculating about the future, saying things like, "I want my kid to have X; and I want my kid to know Y; and if I can't do it, I hope my friends will do Z for my kid?"

I have no trouble at all visualizing a young man telling a good friend, or a teacher, or just a comrade in arms, that he'd like his kid to have his light saber when old enough should he not be there to use it himself. Jedi knights live violent lives, calling violence unto themselves. Maybe such a discussion was a necessary part of training in the old days. Anakin didn't even have to have a kid already to think about such things; I know my friends and I hadn't had kids yet and still we were aware of mortality. Years later, Kenobi might well cherish the memory — a good one out of all the bad — and even mythologize it for himself, as people will when all they have left of a friend are remembered conversations. He mentions trying to give it away before, but Owen wouldn't allow it; once he has Luke in his house, it's a natural thing to do.

Thinking about Kenobi further: *he* certainly blames himself for "causing" Vader, which is a measure of his own pride and how long it has lasted, despite the years. But just because he indulges himself in self-pity, why do so many arguments take his feeling as fact? In the end, the only person who "caused" Vader to happen was Anakin Skywalker. Kenobi could have stood on the top of the



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tallest building in the galactic core, making a total ass of himself, and that wouldn't "make" anyone do anything anyone didn't want to do.

For a long time, arguments have been made in favor of Vader's "integrity," his honesty to himself. Well, integrity, consistency with oneself, is a fairly amoral characteristic when you think about it. A person can be honest to himself about wanting to do perfectly horrible things and can "never waver" from his decided path to conquer the world, no matter who it hurts. It's almost as if we prefer someone who never wavers, even from an ugly path, to someone who tries and errs and tries again, despite knowing that he is not perfect. Kenobi is certainly not perfect and never was in the movies I saw, but all this assumption that he indeed is the cause of it all and that everything he does is twisted and self-serving sometimes seems like an effort to avoid the bittersweet understanding that to live is to muck up and have to clean up your mess — unlike the Vaders and Palpatines who never admit they've made a mess.

Hmmm. Maybe I've been listening to Dr. Laura too long. Gad, can you imagine her analysis of the situations in SW?!

## FASHION STATEMENT

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Hi, everybody ... especially all you riotous MWers — what a wicked, wonderful group of people ... some more wicked than others. And for everyone who couldn't come: start saving your money now for MediaWest next year! Thanks to Cheree and everyone else for making it such a wild weekend full of chocolate, gossip, stories and laughter. And thanks also to everybody for voted for my story (can I say this or is it a commercial?) "The Art of Jedi" in the STAR aWARDs — it was so exciting to receive an Honorable Mention certificate, masterminded by Judy Yuenger. Congratulations to Judy for her highly deserved award for everything she does for fandom!

Susan Garrett's article about SASE's is a good explanation. I've been in fandom long enough to know SASEtiquette, but I wish I'd read this article years ago.

Judy Yuenger's character biographies are interesting and much easier to use for reference than always trying to find them on the screen saver. But what is this business about Obi-Wan "whispering away" with Anakin's wife? Did he talk her to death or what? I think I see George Lucas' wayward thesaurus lurking about the screensaver bios....

Hi, Marti. Have you had any takers for the son you tried to give away in the last issue of SE? I'll put in a good word: Ladies, I've seen his picture, and he's a doll.

Laura: Great assessment of the Dark, tortured Luke, singlehood, etc. In the films, Luke is very independent and not an emotionally clinging person; I can readily see that he could remain unattached through his life. I don't know why so many people see that as negative, though I suspect much of the reaction is based on an unwillingness to be associated with a "societal abnormality" — particularly one that is as tempting as singlehood. ("Singlehood" came from George's thesaurus...)

I agree that Han in ROTJ is practically a throw-away; I explain it to myself by saying that his mind was damaged by the torture device used on him in Cloud City.

Marlene: The best thing about those novels is that Lucas has finally said they're not canon! So I can quite happily disregard the lovelorn Luke of the books (though for someone lovelorn, he certainly made very few efforts to find and hold onto a woman) and keep him a mysterious, mystic single, dedicated to a life of philosophical meanderings.

Louise: Hope you had a good trip home and didn't meet any tornadoes. I like your description of Luke's ROTJ clothes as "unusual and outlandish", and I enjoy the different fanfic stories about how and why he decided on them and where he found them. He's definitely making a fashion statement, but what he's saying was probably open to interpretation by his compatriots — as well as by us.

Maggie: The Jedi are quite a mystery. I enjoyed your comparison of Jedi with nuns — be inconspicuous and do good works. It's difficult then to incorporate the Jedi Knight with the Jedi "monk". Jedi Knights must have been heroic, galaxy-famous warriors, brilliant starpilots — Luke knows the term "Jedi Knight" (and scoffs at the notion his father might have been one of The Few, The Proud, The ... Jedi Knights) while he's completely unfamiliar with the term "The Force" ... he knows the aggressive significance but not the religious. Does he share the common knowledge of his peers — or, most unlikely, did Owen and Beru tell him stories of the Jedi Knights? I suppose the new trilogy will give us details, and let's hope that the movies remain consistent with what we know so far.

And congratulations to Susan on selling two (!) novels — way to go!

Tim: You asked what role Darth can play in the last (never to be done) trilogy? He's coming back — spirit or flesh, he'll be there to advise his grandkids, see how his morose, brooding, tortured, single son is getting along, and save the galaxy from doom... Darth is a Hero!

Happy summer, everyone.

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## SHEEPISH EXPRESSION

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May 1, 1996

Boy, where do I start? I suppose I could say “hi” very sheepishly with my head hung low and my eyes gazing up with a “forgive me?” expression. But, seriously, I never intended to take a break from fandom and SE, never intended to stall replies to letters for weeks, months, years... Never intended a lot of things — especially hurting those who I hope I can still call friends by never being around anymore... It’s difficult to give a reason without it sounding like a paltry excuse for my poor behavior but...

These past couple of years have been strange to say the least. Firstly, I was grappling with depression all the time I contributed to SE, but I got help with that and have been able to live with and cope with the main reason for that depression.

Secondly, as I was emerging from depression, I met a guy. Simple as that! It was *Star Wars*’ fault, too — Lisa Cowan introduced me to Louise (or rather sent me her address), Louise introduced me to Karen, and Karen introduced me to David. And that was that. Hook, line and sinker. We have basically been living in each other’s pockets ever since. We bought an apartment and moved in together (note my new address — yep, same street but different house and postcode! My parents still live at No. 19) almost a year to the day after we met and we are now approaching our second anniversary. Oh, and we got engaged on February 14.

Anyway, these two years have been frantic to say the least! The house ate up all our cash (needed refurbishment) and there is *still* work to be done! My word processor died. Work has hotted up — a lot more disturbed and abused kids than ever! Anyway, a lot of stuff happened — some good, some not so good — too much to relate here. Time just flew by and I suddenly realized I hadn’t written anything since I met David. It’s not his fault! I just haven’t had the time or inclination (or cash) since I met him and finished my last story “Legitimate Target” (a kind of follow up to “Missing”, which is in *Bad Feeling, Too*) in May of 1994. In that I kinda vomited out a lot of my rotten feelings and some of my better ones, too. I felt kinda used up ... but happy.

Anyway, David has been nagging at me to get back into

SW, to start writing again and to tip my toes back into the water. To this end we have just purchased a PC so that I *have* to write or do *something* to warrant such an expensive toy! So, here I am — if you’ll have me back? ((Ed: *Treena — welcome back! And congrats on your engagement!*))

I borrowed the last few issues of SE from Louise to catch up on the gossip, et al, but it’s only #44 that I’ve compiled any answers to. It’s been fun — in a way — a bit like getting on a bike after not riding one for years. Slow and rusty to start with, but something kicks in and you balance out!

Right, here goes ... steady now...

Marti: David is sitting beside me telling me to grovel to you and apologize profusely for not writing back. As I said above, this was not intentional but it was my fault and no one else’s. I guess I got closeted up in my own wee world and was selfish to the point of excluding all others. It’s only now, with life starting to settle a little, that I’m coming round to the fact that I no longer need to hide away and protect what I’ve found, that I once had friends whom I could share my happiness instead of holding it to me. Also that those friends perhaps have needed me and I’ve not been there. I’m sorry, Marti.

Propaganda: It would probably take decades for Imperial indoctrination to be proved wrong for some. Never for others. Look at our own history. Nazism — still going strong all over the globe and not only with those who were fed it during Hitler’s regime, but with many young people who have become disillusioned with present governments. Japan — many still don’t accept the cruelty inflicted upon prisoners of war. The Khmer Rouge. The Viet Cong, etc. etc. Jeez, even our own government feed us propaganda which will linger on.

But, of course, Ben knew that Owen and Beru were in trouble. The very line, “Wait, Luke! It’s too dangerous!” suggests that he knew the stormtroopers would be headed the Lars’ way. He takes the trouble to point out to Luke that *Stormtroopers* shot up the Sandcrawler after Luke has mentioned that “These are the same Jawas that sold us Artoo and Threepio”. It was as though he was telling Luke to “wake up and smell the roses.” But, then, why did he tell Luke to wait? Hmmm ... I’ve been away too long.

M. J. Mink: Sorry, can’t agree that Vader was fighting defensively. In ROTJ, maybe, but certainly not in TESB. He was testing Luke out, gauging his skills and reactions, taking things easy to start with. But, there is no way that, once they reached the levels under the carbon freezing chamber, that Vader was on the defense. That was an all out attack! He gave Luke hell, just for the sake of it. He knew that Luke was no match for him, but by God he was teaching the boy a lesson he’d never forget. Taking his hand — which could be seen as an attack — looks more to

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me like a man tired of fighting and wanting it to end, but also like a father trying to bring himself to not kill his son ... but, again ... I've always thought that Vader's feelings for Luke didn't surface (or the stirrings of Anakin) until Luke chose death rather than join his father.

But in ROTJ, yes. Vader was on the defense. He was utterly outmatched by Luke's power but he was also emotionally crippled by Luke reversing the tables on him. "Come with me..." It speaks volumes.

Anyway, that's only my humble thoughts...

Laura Virgil: Where was I when... I was eleven years old at primary school and nearing puberty. My mother took me to see SW because she wanted to see it! Luke stepped onto the screen — and boy, did those hormones erupt! (Haven't I mentioned this before?) My mother regrets taking me...

Elegant weapons: I'm sorry, but in the wake of the Dunblane massacre, not to mention the recent Tasmanian massacre, I cannot consider *any* weapon elegant. It's a sore point...

Pro novels and all new material from Lucas: Well, hasn't this topic stirred it up among us all? I'd like to say that I could sit on the fence on this. But, I can't. The materialistic side to Lucasfilm has tarnished the Saga for me. It seems it's all about money — yes, I know that films were made to make money, but they're gotten greedy. And, as a fan, I feel exploited, or rather my pocket. I just can't persuade my pocket to part with any cash for the new novels, basically because I don't want to spend any more money on trash! I'm not against new materials, new ideas — I love fan fiction, after all — but the stories are pretty awful, the characterizations just *feel* wrong. I stopped after *Truce at Bakura* (which I quite liked) because when I read the blurb on the books, none appealed to me. It's my own personal choice and I don't berate those who do like them, or those who want to write pro SW. I just feel the fun isn't there anymore. Also, unlike fan writers (and I include those of us who have been writing pro-SW) most of the authors are writing for money — not out of love for the saga and its characters. There's no passion in the books.

In fact, I've sold most of my collection to finance some of the work on the house — I don't miss it. I suppose my perceptions have changed somewhat over the last couple of years — I'm not as materialistic as I once was. In some ways, though, I feel lost in this new SW galaxy...

Z.P.: Hi! It's me. Read what I wrote to Marti, 'cause a lot of it applies to you, too. Sorry...

Where did Luke learn during the years between Yavin and Hoth? Why, with the Alliance, of course! He grew up (somewhat), he matured, learned discipline (to a certain degree), learned to lead men, etc. — all skills a Jedi would need. As for between TESB and ROTJ, well, he learned

from Bespin, from his mistakes, from the thrashing that Vader gave him. He would have taken everything that had happened, put them into some sort of perspective and learned from them.

Yeah, *Braveheart!* What a movie! It was historically incorrect all over the place — Lowlanders didn't wear kilts and Wallace was a Lowlander. That's Highland dress. Scots in that time period didn't paint their faces — that was the Celts in an earlier time. I could go on, but I'm prepared to overlook these faults as the *spirit* of the movie was so ... Scottish! The humor was Scottish! And it finally showed to the world how brutal the English have been to the Scots/Irish/Welsh over the centuries. I am not anti-English — I have many English friends, but, the Scots were/are a nation unto themselves who have been governed by people we did not elect. It's time we had a say in our own affairs. As Wallace said, "Freedom!"

Oh, by the way, Wallace was born in the town of Elderslie (some say it was Ellerslie) which is about 10 miles from Kilbirnie. Louise is even closer. And full marks to Mel Gibson on his Scottish accent — it was pure Glasweign.

Mary Jo Fox: I was really sorry to read that you are leaving but confused as to why? Surely not over this old/new banter? That's part of the fun of SE. We shouldn't take any of this seriously. Why fight when we all love the same thing — but perhaps different aspects of the same thing. It doesn't make sense. Leaving because of "petty squabbles" is silly. Stay, Mary Jo.

Matthew Whitney: Prequel — that's exactly how I view the new novels. I cannot accept them/West End games as canon. To me the movies (and the books of the movies) are canon. I rarely go to other sources of information.

Debbie: Hi!

Louise: Perhaps of all my friends among fandom, you were the most dear and the one I've let down the most. Again, I didn't mean it. My life changed and priorities shifted after meeting David. You know this. I can only publicly say that I'm sorry for letting you down and for leaving you to work on things that I had said I would share. We are getting together a little more often now and I hope this continues. I've honestly missed you.

And, in response to your comments, Here! Here!

John Fredericks: Re Luke and aggression. You said Luke would avoid killing at all cost. Which Luke are you talking about? The Luke after ROTJ would, yes, revere life and kill only when absolutely necessary. But the Luke in ANH... He was totally gungho! Luke at the scene in the detention center, he blasts everything in sight and once everyone is dead, he grabs hold of one of the bodies and drags it off the console. That was a complete disregard of life, of a man whom he (or Han) had just killed. (It reminds me of how the kids now view violence and death

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— they think it's neat! And the nastier it is, the better.) Not once did we see Luke show remorse for anyone/anything he killed — though you could argue that later, once things had died down he reflected on what he had done. Question: did he really have to kill the Gamorrean guards when he entered Jabba's palace? They hadn't attacked him. They merely blocked his way.

Tim Blaes: I'll get that hug yet! If you're at MWC this year, watch out for Louise — give her the hug!

And that's it! I hope that I can become a regular contributor once more, not only to SE but to zines. I've still got a bit of writer's block, but I think I may be getting over it. Anyway, apologies again to those who have written to me and never got a reply — I never intended to be ignorant. I was in love and nothing else mattered. I'm still in love, but waking up to reality!

Geez, it feels good to be back...

## AN EPIPHANY OF SORTS

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MediaWest went by too fast. Yeah, I know MWC always goes by fast, but for me it *really* zoomed by. It seems I wasn't the only attendee there with a record low of spending money. That's okay, in a way, because there seemed to be a record low number of new zines for sale. Depending on who you asked, most of the dealers did alright. But all around, it seemed an atypical con this year.

Not long ago I picked up a *MAD Magazine* special, reprinting all of their SW material, including the Sergio Aragones cartoon Cheree reprinted in SE43. Sure enough, the initials "W.C." were on the original. Just what are they supposed to stand for? Wookiee Commode? Weird Creatures? ((Ed: *Probably Water Closet, a common euphemism for toilet.*))

Hey! How about this for a SW "urban legend"? Someone meets a *terrible fate* by using an alien toilet. File this one along with laser bidet accidents.

Though I still don't know how he'd stash it between time, perhaps Luke uses the Kaiburr Crystal as a paperweight on his desk at the Jedi Academy.

Two more cross-universe scenarios:

*Beauty and the Beast/Gargoyles*: The parallels between the shows are obvious to anyone who's seen them both. Vincent and Goliath would be bound to bump into each other sooner or later. Catherine and Elisa are just as likely to cross paths in their line of work.

*Forever Knight/Touched by an Angel*: Because the light and dark need each other. And because I'm twisted enough to suggest it.

It has occurred to me that there might be more than one way for a Jedi to go Dark besides becoming a megalomaniac. What if a Jedi came down with chronic depression? I'm not sure I'd want to be around a strong Force-user in the grip of despair. Unconsciously they might affect their environment, alter local laws of probability, and negatively affect Force-sensitives. What if a Jedi went undiagnosed with a brain tumor? Suffered from manic depression? Multiple personality? Pregnancy? Too much coffee in the morning?

M. J. Mink: If everybody knew the Emperor was a Force user, it would be harder for him to manipulate people.

Jacqueline Taero: L&L's mother bumped off by a nanny? Talk about "the hand that rocks the cradle!"

Laura Virgil: Where was I when SW opened? Still in high school, trying to keep a low profile, but not succeeding. I was borderline SF/fantasy fan before then, but it wasn't until after SW that I *realized* how much I liked it. An epiphany of sorts.

Oh, I fully understand that artists have to be able to sell their work at the MWC auction. But why is it that "floating heads", obviously lifted from photos are what sells best? And why is it that previously unpublished art seldom includes publishing rights? It seems to me the publishing rights should be listed as "negotiable" if the buyer spends \$\$\$ on a work and would like to use it in a zine s/he publishes, and the artist still gets a contributor's copy of the zine. Why should the artist object? Something could be worked out.

Believe me, I have *nothing* against sexy/sensual artwork. I wish I could illustrate some of the dreams that dance a fandango through my libido. I'm sure I could sell *some* of them at MWC.

I remember riding along with Judith Low to my first MWC. We were talking about the SW radio show. Then, just as we were entering Lucas County, an episode that I hadn't heard before began playing on the radio. Don't you just love dancing the ol' synchronicity tango?

Actually, stop-motion artists *were* used in *Jurassic Park*. Special articulated models, wired into the computer, were used to program motion instructions into CGI dinosaurs. So the old skills meld into the new.

Z. P. Florian: Luke's mom morphing into Old Pruneface? Eeeuw!!! If that happened during an "intimate moment", it could be enough to drive anyone to the Celibate Side of the Force!

The title of the second ST movie was to be *The Vengeance of Khan*, but Lucasfilm insisted they change it because it was too similar to *Revenge of the Jedi*. We all

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know how things finally happened. I can't help but suspect the whole thing was a set up.

Last issue I recommended some comics. I may as well mention a couple of books. First, the anthology *Chicks in Chainmail*, edited by Esther Friesner (who is responsible for the title, she insists) is a collection of what the editor terms "Amazon Comedy". I think my favorite story is "The Stone of War and the Nightingale's Egg" by Elizabeth Ann Scarborough, a reputedly true account, pitting a Chinese emperor's palace guard against the royal harem. Guess which side wins. I also liked "Exchange Program" by Susan Schwartz, in which Hillary Clinton dies and finds herself in Valhalla, where she takes the Valkyries under her wing and puts both Wodin and his boorish son Thor in their places. Don't worry. Hillary gets better.

If *The Omen* had been written by Monty Python, produced by Steven Spielberg, and directed by Ron Howard, the result might be very much like the book *Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch*, by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett. It turns out the Antichrist, who is eleven years old, loves his dog (even though it's really a Satanic hell-hound under all that scruffy hair), really cares about the environment and is the sort of boy anyone would be proud to have as a son. He also doesn't think this Armageddon thing is such a good idea. The book also has "a full chorus of Tibetans, Aliens, Americans, Atlanteans, and other rare and strange Creatures of the Last Days." It has wonderful footnotes and the Four Motorcyclists of the Apocalypse are really cool.

Marlene Karkoska: The prequel movies could still set up who the future Mrs. Skywalker could be. Do you think Luke and Leia are the only children of the Jedi hidden away from the purge? And Yoda's "other hope" has never been *conclusively* ascertained.

While reading *The Young Jedi Knights: The Lost Ones*, I nearly fell out of my seat. On the last page of chapter nine, Leia reads Jacen, Jaina and Anakin a bedtime story, "The Little Lost Bantha Cub"! No mention of poop on Luke's boots, though. Maybe I should start making predictions for the *National Enquirer*.

The whole Church of Ford business was unpleasant but I don't think it should be forgotten or downplayed to new fen. Those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it.

Louise Turner: With who knows how many "little Empires" forming after Palpatine's death, galactic politics could become more baroque than ever. One of these little Empires might still regard the New Republic as a bunch of rowdy rebel yahoos, yet some of their nearby "allies" might make them nervous. Just who do you trust and how far?

Actually, books are frequently revamped. Steven

King's *The Stand* was reissued with material originally edited out. Robert A. Heinlein's *Podkayne of Mars* was released not long ago with the original downbeat ending. Ben Dunn has stopped reprinting the first three issues of his comic *Ninja High School* because he plans to totally redo them, which I think is a big mistake. I tried telling Dunn "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" but he won't listen and Lucas won't either.

Catriona Campbell: With luck, by the time you read this, you'll finally have a look at "McBubba". I finally had some photos made and brought them to MWC for Louise to carry back with her. Louise said, "I have something from Catriona for you." Just the way she said that made me nervous, like I was about to get a pie in the face or something. With incredible swiftness, she wrapped her arms around me and squeezed! My eyes bulged! My ears popped! All air was instantly evacuated from my lungs! I think it was her idea of a "hug". I swear, the woman is part praying mantis!

Maggie Nowakowska: It doesn't sound like the footage restored to *Hidden Fortress* eliminated the "verbal connect with ANH" as much as the redone subtitles. As I sit here on the edge of anime/manga fandom, I observe that no translation of the Japanese language will satisfy everyone. The SW movies don't have this problem, though. Did the earlier print ever reach video?

Cheryl Pryor: Leather Barbie? That one isn't sold in stores, is it? Idea for next year: Auditions for position of Mary Sue.

John Fredericks: Just when the pro Trek novels started to get good (about 10 years ago), policies were instituted, supposedly in Roddenberry's name, that drove the best authors away. There are only a handful of authors that can lure me into buying a new ST novel. Peter David is one. *The Captain's Daughter* would have made a better movie than the one Demora first appeared in. I'm still hoping they'll get Diane Duane to do a Leia trilogy.

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

