



20th Century Fox

Carrie Fisher (Princess Leia) was asked to lose 10 pounds for the role.

**A BOMBARDMENT OF STAR WARS TRIVIA**

- The movie used 365 special effects and 75 miniatures.
  - Peter Mayhew, at 7-foot-2, worked as a porter in a London hospital before playing Chewbacca the Wookiee.
  - Show-biz vet Kenny Baker, the actor inside Chewbacca R2-D2, is only 3-foot-8.
  - Carrie Fisher, then 19, was asked to lose 10 pounds for the role of Princess Leia and tape her breasts so she didn't jiggle.
  - Mark Hamill, who failed to make the cut at an *American Graffiti* audition, went to a dual casting for *Carrie* and *Star Wars* and thought George Lucas was Brian de Palma's gofer.
  - David Prowse, who provided the body of Darth Vader, is a retired undefeated heavyweight boxing champion.
  - The daily production cost for *Star Wars* ran roughly \$100,000.
  - Alec Guinness received two profit points, each worth about \$300,000 at the time, for his work as Obi-Wan Kenobi. Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher and Harrison Ford divided 2 percent of the profits among themselves.
  - For a long time, James Earl Jones, who refused screen credit, had fun denying he was the voice of Darth Vader, but the \$10,000 role led to much work as a voice of authority.
  - Filmmaker Lucas hated President Ronald Reagan's using *Star Wars* as the name of the Strategic Defense Initiative weapons system, even suing fruitlessly to stop it.
  - *Star Wars* was shot in Tozeur, Tunisia; Nevada's Death Valley; Tikal National Park, Guatemala; Elstree Studios outside London; and Shepperton Studio in Middlesex, England.
- SOURCES: George Lucas, *The Creative Impulse* by Charles Champlin; *Skywalking, The Life and Films of George Lucas* by Dale Pollock



Chewbacca

**Lucas' influences are of mythic proportions**

By Jane Sumner

Staff Critic of The Dallas Morning News

*Guerre Stellari. Krieg der Stern. Gwiezdne Wojny.* Whatever its title around the world, *Star Wars* is a spectacular mishmash with martial music, a mulligan stew of myths buried deep in the psyche, a pastiche of old comic strips, monster flicks, swashbucklers and shoot-'em-ups.

Growing up in Modesto, Calif., in the '50s, George Lucas was glued to his family's black-and-white TV set. Biographer Dale Pollock writes in *Skywalking: The Life and Films of George Lucas* that his favorite show was *Adventure Theater*, a half-hour of old movie serials, broadcast nightly on the town's only channel.

Years later, Mr. Lucas tried to buy the rights to one of those serial's heroes for what he called "this big sci-fi/space adventure/Flash Gordon thing." But Federico Fellini, who owned the Flash Gordon rights, wanted more than Mr. Lucas could pay, so the mogul-to-be borrowed the blaster guns, costumes and deco sets and invented his own hero — Luke Skywalker (known at first as Luke Starkiller).

Critic Roger Ebert writes that he hasn't had many out-of-body experiences at a film (meaning his imagination forgot it was in a movie theater), but he had one at *Star Wars*:

"The golden robot, lion-faced space pilot, and insecure little computer on wheels must have been suggested by the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and the Scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*."

Others see the robot comedy team of C-3PO and R2-D2 as a space-age Laurel and Hardy. But Mr. Lucas has always given the nod for the android buddies to Akira Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress* (1958).

He saw the adventure classic, the first Japanese movie in Cinemascope, in film school and never forgot its opening with two foot soldiers, one short and one tall, slogging along in a desolate land. Then along come an

outcast samurai leader, a proud, warlike princess and a fortress that must be destroyed. As critic Ebert puts it, "Seeing *The Hidden Fortress* is like visiting the wellspring of the Force."

Chewbacca, Han Solo's hairy Wookiee pal and co-pilot, was modeled after Mr. Lucas' Siberian Husky, which looked like a person to the owner.

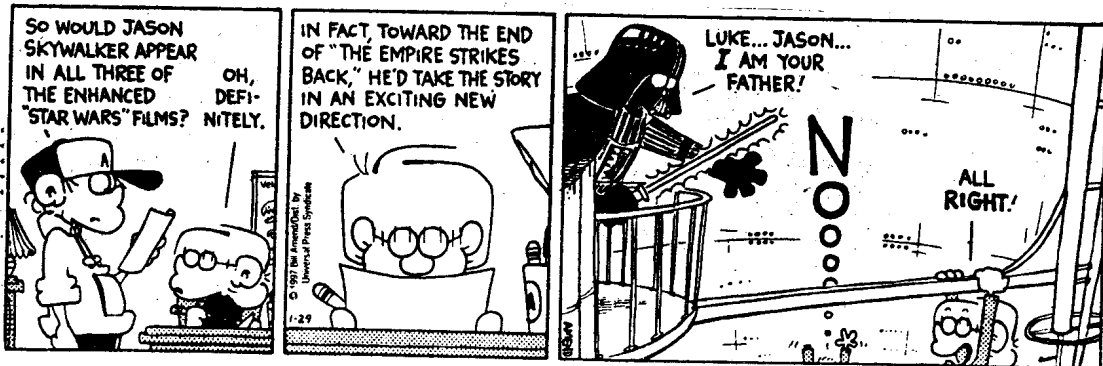
After a near-fatal car crash in 1962, Mr. Lucas discovered the writings of Joseph Campbell dealing with the myths of the world. In *Star Wars*, he used all the standard mythological figures. It's no accident that journalist Bill Moyers held a famed series of interviews with Mr. Campbell, *The Power of Myth*, at Mr. Lucas' ranch.

Over the last two summers of his life, Mr. Campbell, who died in 1987, talked with Mr. Moyers about stories told through the ages to explain the universe and humankind's place in it.

"A movie like *Star Wars* fills a need for spiritual adventure," the master storyteller said. He likened wise man Obi-Wan Kenobi to old Japanese sword masters. "He gives him [Luke] not only a physical instrument but a psychological commitment and a psychological center. He has him exercising with that strange weapon and then pulled the mask down. That's real Japanese stuff."

Another mythical archetype is mercenary Han Solo, Mr. Campbell said. "He was a practical guy, a materialist, at least that's how he thought of himself, but he was a compassionate human being. The adventure evoked a quality of his character he didn't know he had. He thinks he's an egoist, but he really isn't. That's a very lovable kind of human being, I think."

But the most stellar thing about *Star Wars* is its message, aimed at the young, about accepting responsibility. According to *Skywalking*, "The message of *Star Wars* is religious: God isn't dead, he's there if you want him to be. The laws really are in yourself. Lucas is fond of saying, 'the Force dwells within.'"



# WE STILL TRUST THE FORCE

By Catherine Cuellar  
Staff Writer of The Dallas Morning News

**T**wo decades after the Death Star first loomed, the memories of *Star Wars* fans are as vivid and varied as the wacky band of creatures in the movie's famed Mos Eisley cantina.

To mark Friday's 20th-anniversary re-release of *Star Wars*, we asked, "Is the Force still with us?"

And from 73-year-old Helen Skinner ("Entering the theater a pacifist, this oldster left a warrior") to 18-year-old cancer survivor Corey Tiner, who bought an action figure after each chemotherapy session, to 6-year-old Doug Daniels ("Good guys rule!!! Bad guys drool!!!"), 250 of you proved it is.

Few of you could contain your enthusiasm in the prescribed 50 words, though many could have easily spared the most popular 14, "Long ago in a galaxy far, far away" and "May the Force be with you." (Look for excerpts below and on Page 2C.)

*Star Wars* is clearly a phenomenon that crosses generations, from those who cut their intergalactic teeth on Flash Gordon and Sputnik to the toddlers who witnessed Neil Armstrong's moonwalk on grainy TV sets to the masses who mourned when Challenger blasted away our space innocence.

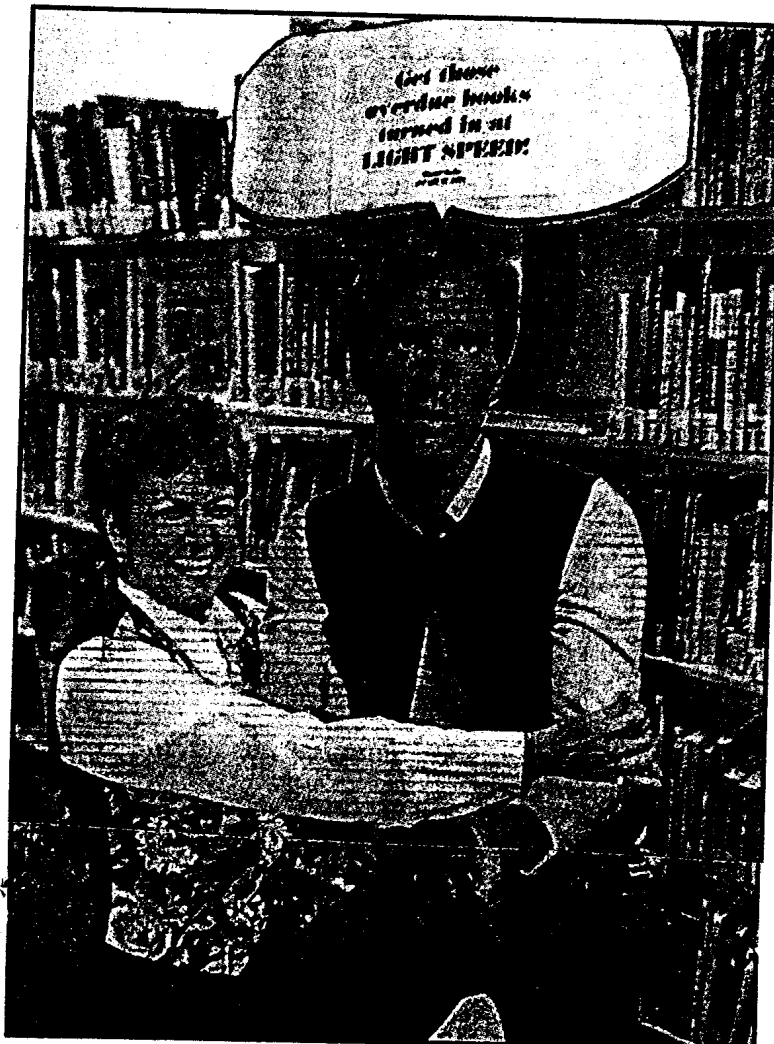
And the pull of George Lucas' space epic — which returns Friday to theaters with retooled sound and souped-up computer graphics, followed

Feb. 21 by *The Empire Strikes Back* and March 7 by *Return of the Jedi* — remains forceful.

"When I was little, *Star Wars* was the big fantasy," says Rob Cohen, 24. "I had all the action figures and spaceships. I guess I always had my own *Star Wars* movies going on in my bedroom with all the toys and stuff. . . . It's amazing because with all the new technology and another 10 or 15 years of filmmaking, the *Star Wars* movies are still as good as it gets."

But the fascination isn't limited to children. Retired librarian Mary Townsley says *Star Wars* "provided a bridge over the generational gap to the kids I worked with and to my own kids."

"I've seen it come down to my grandchildren."



The Dallas Morning News: Arlene Kadoch

Librarian Linda Bambina had a crush on Harrison Ford. She uses her life-size Han Solo cutout to remind students to return books "at light speed."

## 'STAR WARS' HAS BEEN A TOUCHSTONE IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD

She says she regularly shops for tie-in trinkets with her 41-year-old son and gives *Star Wars* gifts every year to her son-in-law and grandchildren.

For others, the romance of the plot was as interesting as the action. Librarian Linda Bambina, 49, got a crush on Harrison Ford and still uses her life-size Han Solo cutout to remind students to return their books "at light speed."

"I wasn't into toys; I was a grown-up. But still, all of it's just pervasive," she says. "It was so astounding to have seen that many new things in one film and have a good story. It wasn't just a Flash Gordon gag kind of story. It was really intriguing, and it was many-layered."

It was a memorable movie date for several couples.

"I called a girlfriend and asked her if she would like to go see *Star Wars* with me," wrote 41-year-old Steven Greenwalt. "She said no, that she was busy that night, so I called another girlfriend and asked

her. She said yes, and from that time on we have been together."

He and wife Margaret, 41, celebrated their 19th wedding anniversary Jan. 23.

Others look to the re-release for romantic inspiration.

"In the four years that we've been together, our dating era has ended," wrote 22-year-old Amy Payne of Denton.

"I have three dates planned for this year — not my birthday, not

our anniversary, but Jan. 31, Feb. 21 and March 7. Thanks to *Star Wars*, I can finally go out on a real date again."

And the movie trilogy helped some through life-and-death struggles.

Susie Marshall, 55, says her husband John battled non-Hodgkin's lymphoma by visualizing the cancer cells in his body as Storm Troopers.

"What he felt like he needed to do emotionally and spiritually was to have something that he could identify as being the 'bad guys,' and he could overcome that," she says. "So he sort of seized on the idea of *Star Wars*."

"The evil Empire was cancer itself. He couldn't kill all the cells. He needed to kill the disease in its entirety, so that represented all the evil that was there. We rented the movies and watched them all again. I bought all the little characters to look at and focus on, and it was very helpful to him."

Mr. Marshall's last cancer treatment was a year ago, and his wife says he is showing no signs of the disease.

The film also spurred career aspirations for fans, such as 28-year-old Kurt Kistler, who says *Star Wars* piqued his interest in working as an actor, musician and 3-D graphic artist. Still, he wonders if the special edition will be able to rekindle the movie magic it once sparked.

"It's going to be different because it's as though you've examined every single particle of the movie," he says. "You've been able to scrutinize it and take every little second of it over the years. So it will



The Dallas Morning News: Ariane Kadach

Steven and Margaret Greenwalt had a date to see *Star Wars*, and, he says, "... from that time on we have been together." They celebrated their 19th wedding anniversary last week.



The Dallas Morning News: Ariane Kadach

John Ankeny has been collecting *Star Wars* paraphernalia since he was 6 years old: "*Star Wars* was the center of my universe."

be completely familiar except for the new additions. ... It's kind of like hearing the same story over and over again, and then somebody changes a word, and all of a sudden, it throws you off."

Cynthia Stine, who saw the movie in a theater 11 times when she was 10, agrees.

"I don't know if anything can really quite capture that first time because it was so stunning," she says. "I don't think anything will ever be quite the same as that experience, but I have always enjoyed it."

Carrie Fisher's take-charge Leia offered an alternative to passive princesses with a space-age, feminist role model.

"In this fairy tale the princess gets to be proactive in saving the kingdom," wrote Elizabeth Curliss, 31.

"In the process, she wins over the bland, handsome young prince and the sexy, rogue-bad-boy, all without feigning helplessness or hiding her intelligence! That's the

kind of princess I wanted to be."

And for a new generation of fans who know the trilogy only from video, the cinematic experience will certainly be an improvement. Irving's Kristi Ferebee, 12, says she's been watching *Star Wars* since age 5.

"I really appreciate it differently now. When I was younger, I thought it was really neat and I really liked the Ewoks and stuff, but I watched the entire trilogy again just a couple weeks ago, and I really picked up on some stuff that I hadn't noticed before," she says.

"I really liked the darker stuff in *The Empire Strikes Back* more than I did when I was a little kid."

She and her pals have already made plans for this weekend's *Star Wars* return.

"When I first saw the trailers for it in the theaters, you know they say, 'If you've only seen it on the TV screen, you haven't seen it at all.' And on the trailers, it's so different, it's really overwhelming. I really can't wait."

## ARTS BEAT

### 'Star Wars' shoots to No. 1

LOS ANGELES — Twenty years after its debut, *Star Wars* proved it still has the force to demolish all other comers at the box office.

The second opening of the refurbished film was the top-selling January weekend release ever, figures released Sunday show. It collected an estimated \$36.2 million over the weekend, dwarfing the nation's No. 2 film, *Jerry Maguire*, which took in \$5.6 million.

The movie, with enhanced special effects and a few new scenes, had the ninth-highest three-day opening ever, according to estimates from Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc.

The epic about a motley band of heroes fighting an evil space empire has screened only in video form for a generation. Americans still captivated by "the ultimate story of good and evil" flocked to theaters to see it again on the big screen, and many brought their children, said Tom Sherak, chairman of 20th Century Fox Domestic Film Group.

"It's part of our culture," he said. "It's one of those rare instances where a movie becomes our best friend. We remember the best friend."

In its 1977 release, *Star Wars* grossed \$323 million in North America — then a record and still fourth on the all-time list. The re-release is sure to push it higher on that list, Mr. Sherak said.

The second and third chapters of the trilogy, *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983) also will be re-released in coming weeks.

The only truly new release in the top 10, *Gridlock'd*, starring Tim Roth and the late Tupac Shakur, opened at No. 9 by collecting \$2.8 million.

Here are the estimated weekend totals for the top 10 films:

1. <i>Star Wars</i>	\$36.2 million
2. <i>Jerry Maguire</i>	\$5.6 million
3. <i>Scream</i>	\$4.8 million
4. <i>Metro</i>	\$4.4 million
5. (tie) <i>Beverly Hills Ninja, Evita</i>	\$4.3 million
7. <i>In Love and War</i>	\$3.9 million
8. <i>The Relic</i>	\$2.9 million
9. <i>Gridlock'd</i>	\$2.8 million
10. (tie) <i>Michael, Mother</i>	\$2.6 million

## COINCIDENCE?

The entire baby-boom generation saw "The Wizard of Oz" every year on television since 1959. (It originally aired in 1956 — seen by a phenomenal 45 million viewers — but did not become an annual staple until three years later.) A generation later, Gen-Xers saw "Star Wars" repeatedly. Each is a cultural reference point for its viewers. But look closely: The movies are virtually the same.

### WIZARD

Dorothy is an orphan; living with her aunt and uncle.  
 Big tragedy leads to quest  
 Along the quest, collects weird friends who join quest  
 Toto, faithful dog always with Dorothy  
 Glinda, the Witch of the North, a guardian who guides Dorothy  
 Tin Man  
 Scarecrow  
 Cowardly Lion  
 Ruby slippers, what Dorothy possesses that makes her invulnerable  
 The powerful Oz is a man behind a big, deep voice and curtain  
 Dorothy discovers that she always had it within her power to get what she wanted  
 Big ceremony near the end with everybody getting medals, testimonials or degrees

### STAR WARS

Luke Skywalker is an orphan; living with his aunt and uncle.  
 Big tragedy leads to quest  
 Along the quest, collects weird friends who join quest  
 R2D2, faithful robot always with Luke  
 Obi-Wan Kenobi, a guardian who guides Luke  
 C3PO  
 Han Solo  
 Chewbacca  
 Light saber, what Luke possesses that makes him invulnerable  
 Darth Vader is a man behind a big, deep voice and big outfit  
 Luke discovers that he always had it within his power to get what he wanted  
 Big ceremony near the end with everybody getting medals, testimonials or degrees

The Orange County Register Nov. 29, 1996

## TOP TEN REASONS WHY WE'D RATHER LIVE IN THE STAR TREK UNIVERSE THAN THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE

10. Any schmuck with a sob story can move the heart of the vilest villain—try that with the Emperor, boyo.
9. *Star Trek*: Clean, well-lit spaceships with stocked bars. *Star Wars*: Broken-down old freighters with smelly Wookies.
8. *Enterprise* goes to nice clean starbase for repairs. *Millennium Falcon* lands in space-lizard guts.
7. No Dark Side of the Force in *Star Trek*.
6. Yoda may give better advice, but Troi is better looking.
5. No one ever kissed their sister (twice!) in *Star Trek*.
4. Teleporters in *Star Trek* make for clean, easy transportation...as compared to cramped X-Wing fighters.
3. Tatooine: Dry, dusty hellhole. Rubicun III (pleasure planet): pastoral world with half-naked babes and no moral restrictions.
2. No matter what a device was designed for in *Star Trek*, you can always tinker with it and make it do something else entirely.
1. Tactile holograms. Ooooh.

# Which god is the 'Force' in the 'Star Wars' universe?

By Terry Mattingly  
Scripps Howard News Service

A long time ago, in a movie multiplex not so far away, a child looked up and asked: "Mom, Dad, is the Force the same thing as God?"

Children have been asking that question for 20 years. The simple answer is "yes." But this raises another question: Which god or God is at the center of the *Star Wars* universe?

The trilogy's creator was aware that his work invaded turf traditionally reserved for parents, priests and preachers. George Lucas wrote *Star Wars* shortly after the cultural revolution of the '60s. He sensed a spiritual void.

"I wanted it to be a traditional moral study, to have some sort of palpable precepts in it that children could understand," Mr. Lucas said in a recent *New Yorker* interview. "There is always a lesson to be learned. . . . Traditionally, we get them from church, the family, art and in the modern world we get them from the media — from movies."

Mr. Lucas set out to create a modern mythology to teach right and wrong. The result was a fusion of "Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe" and Joseph Campbell's "The Hero with a Thousand Faces," of Arthurian legends and Japanese samurai epics, of Carlos Castaneda's *Tales of Power* and the Narnia tales of C.S. Lewis.

Along the way, Mr. Lucas sold \$1.3 billion worth of tickets, and *Star Wars* merchandise sales have topped \$4 billion. Now, a revamped *Star Wars* is back in theaters, to be followed by its sequels, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *The Return of the Jedi*. A trilogy of "prequels" is set to begin in 1999.

The impact of Mr. Lucas' work has led some researchers to speak in terms of a *Star Wars* generation. A modern preacher who wants to discuss self-sacrifice will be understood by more people if he refers to the death of Jedi knight Obi Wan Kenobi, rather than that of St. Stephen.

"It was natural that my generation would latch on to these stories," said Jason Ruspini, webmaster of the unofficial *Star Wars* Home Page, one of nearly 1,000 *Star Wars* Internet sites. "They were much more attractive and appropriate than the ancient myths of Judeo-Christian theology. How could these draconian and antiquated stories possibly compete with the majesty and scope of the *Star Wars* universe?"

Mr. Lucas grew up in the 1950s in Modesto, Calif. Although he attended a Methodist church with his family, biographer Dale Pollock notes that he was turned off by the "self-serving piety" of Sunday school. Mr. Lucas also visited the housekeeper's German Lutheran congregation, where he was impressed by the elaborate rituals. Traces of these experiences are woven into his work.

"The message of *Star Wars* is reli-

gious: God isn't dead, he's there if you want him to be," Mr. Pollock writes in his book *Skywalking*.

Mr. Lucas puts it this way: "The laws really are in yourself."

The faith in *Star Wars* is hard to label. The Force is defined as "an energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us and penetrates us."

It contains both good and evil. Jedi master Yoda clearly teaches a form of Buddhism. Yet the Lucas liturgy also proclaims "May the Force be with you," a variation on the Christian phrase "May the Lord be with you."

The plot includes other symbols and themes from biblical faith. Mr. Lucas has embraced both "passive Oriental philosophies and the Judeo-Christian ethic of responsibility and self-sacrifice," according to Mr. Pollock.

Thus, some Christians hail *Star Wars* as evidence of a cultural search for moral absolutes. On the World Wide Web, others use the films as glowing icons that teach Eastern philosophy.

At the end of Mr. Pollock's book, Mr. Lucas acknowledges that, by setting his goals so high, he is asking to be judged by very high standards. The creator of *Star Wars* explains that one of his least favorite fantasies is about what will happen when he dies. Perhaps, he said, he will come face to face with God and hear these words: "You've had your chance and you blew it. Get out."

Terry Mattingly teaches communications at Milligan College in Tennessee.



# Wookiee Here! Air & Space Does 'Star Wars'

## Smithsonian Exhibit Follows Re-Release of Film Trilogy

By Jacqueline Trescott  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Spirit of St. Louis will soon be virtually tire-toe with Darth Vader and R2D2.

The National Air and Space Museum announced yesterday that it will mount a comprehensive exhibition next fall to mark the 20th anniversary of the movie "Star Wars." In turning once again to a multimedia interpretation of a fictional space adventure, the Smithsonian's most popular museum hopes to boldly go where it has been before by replicating the success of its "Star Trek" exhibition. That display, from February 1992 to January 1993, drew nearly 900,000 visitors and had its own volunteer force of 300 people to help the hundreds who lined up before the museum opened each day.

"Star Wars: The Magic of Myth" will be the first time a large group of the original props, artwork, models and costumes for characters like Han Solo and Jabba the Hutt will be displayed in one place. The artifacts of the "Star Wars" movie trilogy—the 1977 original plus "The Empire Strikes Back" (1980) and "Return of the Jedi" (1983)—have been stored in the California archives of Lucasfilm Ltd., and only a few have been displayed in San Francisco and Japan.

### THE YEAR'S OBITUARIES

#### NOVEMBER

■ **Mark Lenard**, 68, actor best known as Sarek of Vulcan, father of *Star Trek's* Mr. Spock, Nov. 22 of multiple myeloma.

#### STAR WARS, From D1

"We want to celebrate the power that this fantasy has to capture the imagination of space flight," said Mary Henderson, chairman of the museum's art and culture department, who is organizing the show of 250 artifacts. The exhibition is being underwritten by Bantam Books, which is publishing a companion text, and Lucasfilm, the company of the trilogy's creator, George Lucas.

"Star Wars" is the second-highest-grossing movie ever, behind "Jurassic Park," and both the filmmakers and the Smithsonian Institution hope the exhibition will tap into that popularity.

The three films are being re-released in theaters early next year. Lucasfilm has added previously discarded footage, digital special effects and spiffed-up soundtracks. Using the latest computer technology, Lucas has created new creatures and vehicles. "Star Wars" will be released Jan. 31, followed by "Empire" on Feb. 21 and "Jedi" on March 7.

"It is a mystery to us, the way the film has touched hearts and minds," said Gordon Radley, president of Lucasfilm. He said the ability of "Star Wars" to "cut through language and geography," as well as provide family entertainment, makes it suitable for a museum exhibition.

The material is also fitting for the Smithsonian, he pointed out, because the props might be the last massive examples of pre-computer sci-fi movie artistry. "A lot of the special effects were done in a three-dimensional form. Today, a lot of this stuff gets done on the computer and the filmmakers only use some references in three dimensions," said Radley.

The plans for the exhibition, said the museum's Henderson, include exploring the frontier myths that inspired Lucas, as well as the age-old

confrontation between good and evil. "We want to examine this space-flight fantasy as part of our late-20th-century mythology. 'Star Wars' is creative mythology; it uses a classical ancient form of the hero's journey," said Henderson.

The "Star Wars" series follows the adventures of young Luke Skywalker, a couple of raffish smugglers (Han Solo and Chewbacca) and two endearing robots (R2D2 and C3PO). Skywalker discovers he is able to tap into a mysterious power called "the Force." Soon he and the others are swept up into a galactic war pitting the good Princess Leia and other rebels against the Evil Empire and its foremost hatchet man, Darth Vader. While discovering how to harness the power of the Force, the heroes dash around the galaxy, dropping in on a multispecies tavern, escaping from the headquarters of a sluglike criminal overlord and orga-

nizing resistance on a planet populated by teddy bear look-alikes.

The Smithsonian exhibition's design is to be a traditional display of the filmmaking materials, not an interactive exhibit. A survey of visitors to the "Star Trek" show, which Henderson also organized, indicated that "the people loved the props, the models and the costumes," said Henderson. "So this gallery will be crammed with stuff." The comprehensive exhibit will open next November and run for a year. A small case of storyboards and costumes was installed two weeks ago and will remain on display until April outside the museum's "Flight and the Arts" gallery.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For scripts of the "Star Wars" trilogy, click on the above symbol on the front page of *The Post's* site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.washingtonpost.com>



**WEB WARS**  
 For a complete look at how our readers said *Star Wars* changed their lives, check out our Web page at [www.dallasnews.com](http://www.dallasnews.com)

## THE READERS STRIKE BACK

"With wide-eyed wonderment, my imaginings of hyperspace were realized by the *Star Wars* trilogy's galactic cast. Entering the theater a pacifist, this oldster left a warrior, surrounded by the Force, ready to ignite her bedside light saber to fight for the way of the Jedi. Long live the prequels!"

— Helen Skinner, 73, Dallas

"I used to have trouble getting on Central Expressway. But now I just trust the Force. I close my eyes and floor it like Luke Skywalker would have done."

— Bob Banks, 39, Dallas

"When I was 5, I had cancer. After every chemo session, my parents would take me to Toys R Us and I would buy a new *Star Wars* toy. It would help me forget about the spinal tap or whatever treatment I had to take that day. I have been in remission for 13 1/2 years. This year for Christmas, I got a new Millennium Falcon and the trilogy videos. The chemo memories have faded, but the fun of collecting *Star Wars* toys, watching the movies and knowing the Force will be with me always will never fade."

— Corey Tiner, Wilson, Okla.

"In *Star Wars*, I learned to protect my world and don't let the bad guys rule. Obi said don't let them get you. The Force means God is watching you always. Good guys rule!!! Bad guys drool!"

— Doug Daniels, 6, Carrollton

### Royal treatment

"As an impressionable preteen, *Star Wars* was one of my fairy tales. But in this fairy tale, the princess gets to be proactive in saving the kingdom. In the process, she wins over the bland, handsome young prince and the sexy, rogue-bad-boy, all without feigning helplessness or hiding her intelligence! That's the kind of princess I wanted to be."

— Elizabeth Curless, 31, Dallas

### Career counseling

"The first movie I ever saw at the theater was *The Empire Strikes Back*. Since then, I am enamored with Mr. Lucas' saga, awed by its magnificence. In fact, the trilogy inspired me to become a director in hopes of someday creating a film worthy of the respect *Star Wars* commands."

— Jason Folks, 19, New York University Film School

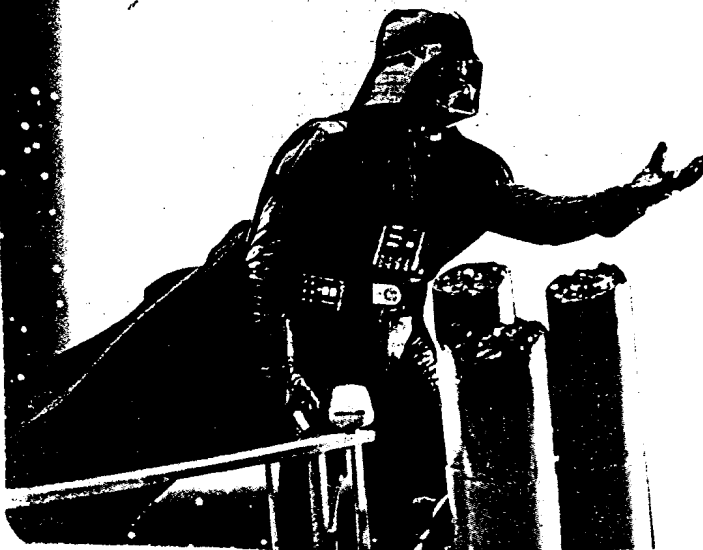
### Sound experience

"Two words: John Williams. His highly successful music for the *Star Wars* films almost certainly rescued the full-orchestral film score from impending replacement by synthesized sound over the ensuing 20 years. Mr. Williams' music continues to inspire and encourage my writing for large orchestra and other media."

— Randol Bass, 43, Dallas

### Stellar romance

"While standing in line in a shopping mall to see *Star Wars*, my girlfriend dropped to her knees, grabbed my hand and asked me to marry her. We've been married nearly 19 years and I treasure *Star Wars* because it is tied to the Please see ALL on Page 3C.



### Life stories

"I was born in El Salvador and was still living there when *Star Wars* first opened. I was 7 years old. My family and I were just about to move to the U.S., and as much as *Star Wars* opened up a child's imagination in the figurative sense, it also seemed to parallel our own move into a new world."

— Dr. Eduardo Lorenzana, Dallas

"A long time ago in a place not so far away, a 10-year-old's life was changed forever. Shortly before my grandmother's death, we took her to Houston for chemotherapy. One night, *Star Wars* was our escape from reality. I anxiously await my escape to that galaxy once again."

— J. Adam Rogers, Dallas

### Name game

"*Star Wars* has dramatically changed my life. My name is Luke, and so many people feel compelled, whenever they are around me, to do their best Darth Vader imitation. They start heavy breathing and they say, 'Luke, I am your father.' Over the past 20 years I've heard this about 7,000 times, and it's just driving me nuts. To top it off, everyone thinks that they're the first to think of saying it to me."

— Luke Lang, 31, Euless

### Generations

"I loved *Star Wars* when it came out. But it changed my life this year. My 19-year-old daughter loves it, and now we have something in common."

— Eileen Chordas, 45, The Colony

"When I first heard that *Star Wars* was going to be re-released, I immediately was taken back to my second-grade year. On a Sunday afternoon, I could not wait to leave church and rush to the theater with my father. I am taking him this time."

— Craig Barnes, Garland

"*Star Wars* strongly connected with the boy in me, using its wonderful, original characters, fast plot and awesome effects. It transported me from being earthbound into an exciting adventure a galaxy away, where Good really triumphed over Evil. And at age 55, the Force is still with me."

— Phil York, 55, Irving

"*Star Wars* gave me great toys to play with. It gave me good movies to watch a lot."

— Allen Lockridge, 7, Hurst



The Dallas Morning News: Ariane Kadach

*Star Wars* buff Allen Lockridge, 7, has watched the movie on video a zillion times, but he can't wait to see it on the big screen.



Dave Smith photo

Some readers told us the *Star Wars* trilogy touched many parts of their lives, affecting what they read, how they dressed and how they played. Dave Smith of Dallas wrote: "How has *Star Wars* affected my life? Just check out my Halloween costume, the Battle of Endor."

### Lofty ideals

"In college, my friends all considered one's knowledge of the *Star Wars* trilogy script as a clear indicator of social status. I was a disgrace to my Jedi comrades. Today, I actually understand what Jabba is saying without reading the subtitles."

— Michael D. Portman, 22, Dallas

"When George Lucas gave us *Star Wars*, he defined a generation. Part Western, part space opera, *Star Wars* is a classic family tragedy. My generation found its modern myth. With *The Empire Strikes Back*, myth gave way to meaning, and when Yoda explained the Force, I was truly inspired. Nothing is impossible if one opens his or her mind, and with knowledge comes great power. It was almost religion."

— Edward C. Draganski, 31, Rowlett

"My hero is Luke Skywalker, and every day I try to become more like him. I've gained new courage to do things that I want to do instead of cowering and saying, 'Well, I'll try.' When I am under stress, I just remember that fear, anger and aggression are of the dark side, and that helps keep me calm. I've also been able to impress my friends with my encyclopedic knowledge of the *Star*

*Wars* universe. This has really opened up a whole new life for me."

— Becky Budd, 16, Denton

"*Star Wars* brought me to Joseph Campbell. Joseph Campbell taught that in each of us is the hero. We are strengthened by the belief that we would, when challenged, act as the hero. That everyone around us would be as noble, and as good just for being in our presence. That our sacrifices would be for the good of the whole, the all, the Force."

— Paula Carlisle, 50, Flower Mound

start of the most joyous earthly relationship I have."

— Stuart Brogden, Corinth

"When you walk into my house, it is clear to anyone with half a brain that I have three children. Actually, I have none, just one husband. In the four years that we've been together, our dating era has ended. He wants to stay at home and watch the trilogy on TV every weekend. That has all changed now. I have three dates planned for this year — not my birthday, not our anniversary, but Jan. 31, Feb. 21 and March 7. Thanks to *Star Wars*, I can finally go out on a real date again. Thank you, thank you, thank you."

— Amy Payne, 22, Denton

### Toy wars

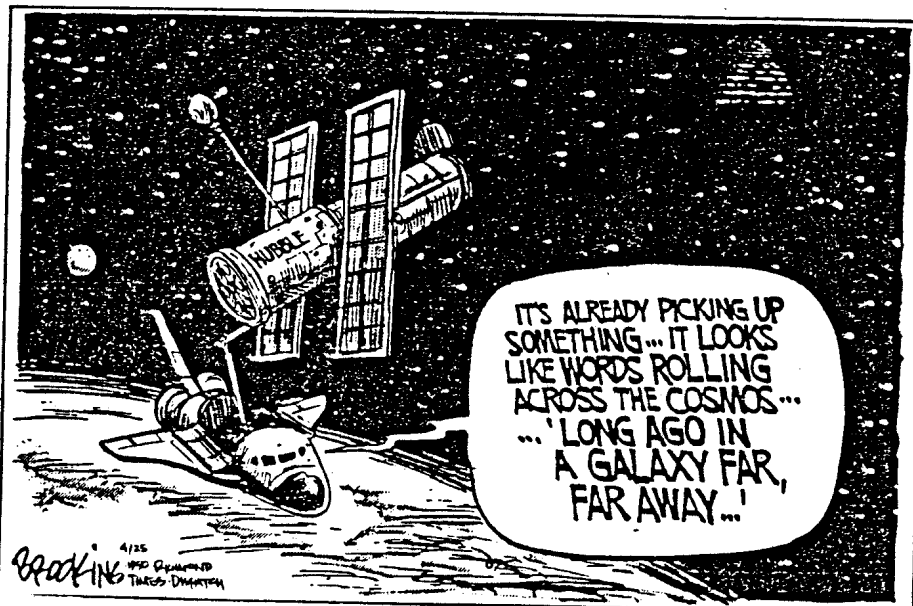
"*Star Wars* was the center of my universe. From C-3PO cereal for breakfast to Han Solo sheets at bedtime, I was engrossed. *Star Wars* taught me what it truly means to be a consumer in today's world: Luke Skywalker action figures, Darth Vader kites, Chewbacca T-shirts, Death Star board games, R2-D2 puzzles, and so much more."

— John Warner Ankeney, 25, Dallas

"My son was 8 years old and loved *Star Wars*. The special effects fascinated us all. We drove 21 miles every week to Burger King to get the *Star Wars* glasses; he had towels, sheets, blankets, bedspread, curtains and collected all the small figures (which are very valuable today — we still have them all). Today, he and I are still big fans and very grateful we saved all these items."

— Kathy Bradshaw, 51, Marshall

## Hubble telescope: An eye on the sky





BILLY, I KNOW YOU'RE EXCITED  
THE MOVIE'S BEING RE-RELEASED,  
BUT WOULD YOU PLEASE PUT  
AWAY YOUR "STAR WARS" TOYS...

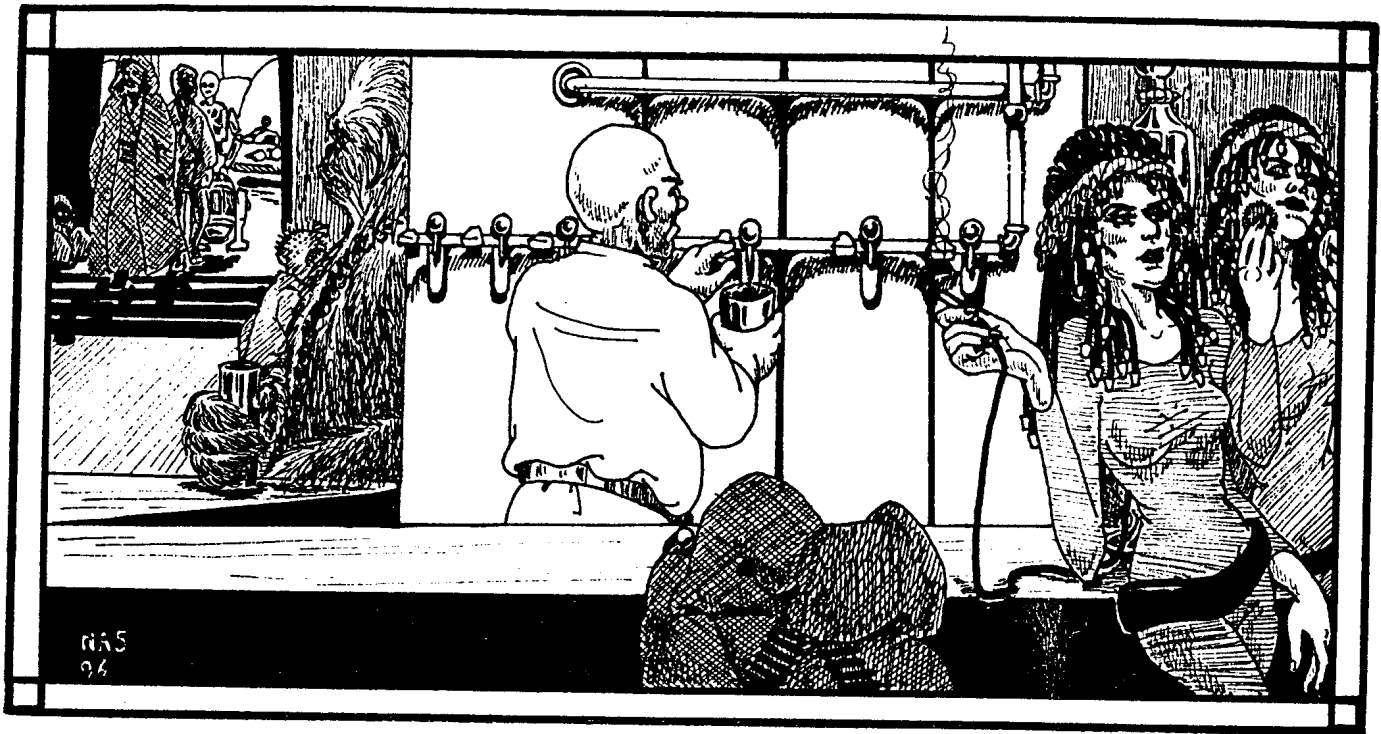
YES DEAR.



I'M NOT AFRAID TO BE  
AS VILLAINOUS AS EVER,  
THANKS TO "DEPENDS"  
UNDERGARMENTS...

GEEZ. NOT  
ANOTHER  
"STAR WARS"  
PRODUCT TIE-IN...





## FROM A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

### NEWS BITS

Lisa Cowan  
P. O. Box 5276  
Orange, CA 92613

October 25, 1996

As usual, I enjoyed SE #45, especially the Telephone Courtesy article by Susan Garrett. When I ran the fan club for Mark Hamill, I had fans try and get my unlisted phone number any number of ways. They would call the Post Office and say it was an emergency and they had to reach me. Luckily, the Post Office never gave in, but would call me instead. Some fans would manage to get the number and call me at odd hours, even at 4:00 a.m. They would usually want to know how they could meet Mark. Some even would say they were coming to Southern California and would I drive them to Mark's house! Very annoying!

When I got involved with the *Tucker* movie club and then published our book on the Tucker car, I ended up listing On The Mark Publishing in the phone book so fans can reach me that way. But since I'm not as active in fandom anymore, it's not a problem.

News bits: As most of you know, George Lucas is definitely going to direct at least the first of the three new SW films. Actual filming begins this spring in England's Pinewood Studios.

The dates of the original SW special editions re-releases keep changing. As of October, SW:ANH will

debut January 31st.

A fourth Indiana Jones movie has been put "on the back burner" due to the busy schedules of Lucas, Harrison Ford and Steven Spielberg. The film is not dead, but pretty dormant.

The three hour radio drama *Return of the Jedi* is now available at book stores and in many catalogs. Anthony Daniels is C-3PO and John Lithgow plays Yoda.

Thanks for planning to run my 5 part SW panel. I look forward to seeing it. By the way, *Mythprint* is back in print again.

By the way, everyone please note that I have a new zip code, compliments of the US post office. Thrill.

### GO SEE STAR WARS!

Chris Graham  
12062 W. Edinger  
Space 8  
Santa Ana, CA 92704-3820

December 5, 1996

First off, I saw the trailer for the revamped Trilogy last month. I liked the way it began with a small t.v. screen; it's a very dramatic difference when it fills up the movie screen. The new scenes don't seem as if they'll add much to the Story, but it will be nice to have the blue-screening cleaned up — what is that wiggly-wormy-thingy on

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Palpie's hood in ROTJ, anyway? But what am I blathering about? By the time you read this, the movies will be out. Put this down and go see 'em!

Z. P. Florian: And maybe the Emperor convinced Darth that he was once Anakin Skywalker and that Luke was his son merely to test his loyalty: would Vader remain by Palpatine's side or join with his "son" to rule the galaxy? Of course I don't believe this for a minute, but...

What's "gafiated"? And where does it come from? ((Ed: This is a fannish word that derives from GAFIA which stands for Getting Away From It All. It means that you've left fandom either temporarily or permanently and are no longer actively involved.))

Marlene Karkoska: Maybe OWK let Darth live because he killed as many Imps as he did Rebels. Of course I don't believe this for a minute, either.

I don't own a computer, but I appreciated your discussion of fan fiction online, anyway. Guess I'll just have to work harder, but first I must buy a CD player to play my SW soundtrack set!

Matthew Whitney: I agree with you about Han's "defining moment" is killing Greedo. I'd also like to add, if Greedo fired first, he'd have had to be an awfully poor shot to have missed Han at such close range!

Marti Schuller: From one chocolate/SW fan to another, wouldn't it be nice if they made SW chocolates, or at least SW character chocolate molds? (Don't worry, Cheree, I won't write anything X-rated about wanting to lick Han.) Are you listening, oh gods of marketing?

"Reality was made by Hoover and sucks with industrial strength." I want that on a plaque.

Gerald Crotty: Your prequel outline was very interesting, but I have two nits to pick with you. First, you write "[Anakin] has Force abilities but doesn't understand what they are." This doesn't fit with what we know of the only Jedi we've ever seen in training — Luke. When we first meet him, Luke has no inkling of his Force abilities, even though by Yoda's standards he's "old." Luke has only inherited a "strength" in the Force and needs training to learn how to manipulate it. Even a Force-sensitive isn't going to accidentally/spontaneously levitate a moisture vaporator, after all. Becoming a Jedi seems to require that another Jedi/Force-sensitive sense your "strength" and then train you to use it; doesn't it? I'm open for argument.

Also, killing the entire Jedi order because your wife is unfaithful is perhaps a tad harsh. :) What if Mrs. Skywalker were the Emperor's daughter? (One hopes she took her looks and temperament from her mother's side, though.)

That reminds me, does anyone remember reading a prequel script circa 1983? I remember the brother of a friend of mine had one, but all I remember about it was that it was about Anakin and his wife, whose name started with an "A". What was this?! ((Ed: I remember seeing this at

cons. Mrs. Skywalker's name was "Arcadia" and the script was entitled "Fall of the Republic." While it looked official, it was just the product of someone's imagination.))

John Fredericks: I just re-read the novelizations for the first time in a decade, and I noticed that in ROTJ Ben tells Luke he was going to tell him Vader was his dad after Luke finished his training on Dagobah, but that Luke ran off to Cloud City too quickly. Yoda adds, "Obi-Wan would have told you long ago, had I let him." If you accept the novelizations as canon, this takes the heat off Ben and puts it on Yoda.

Cheryl Pryor: I liked your comment about Luke starting the new Jedi order "from scratch," but it has a catch: with no knowledge of Jedi history, he wouldn't know what mistakes not to repeat.

Still, destroying the entire Jedi order as an "overhaul" smacks a bit of Noah and the Ark. And that brings me to another point: if Darth knew he had a son (an idea we cannot rule out) and presumed he would be Force-sensitive, then doesn't it follow — as the Knight follows the Way — that he helped destroy the Jedi so that he and his son could restart the Order anew themselves?

Suzanne Godsalve: The only reason I can see for Vader not sensing Leia's Force abilities on the Death Star was that Leia had been blocking her mind against the mind-probe. In spite of his Force abilities, he couldn't get the plans from her mind; perhaps she was still blocking herself, dampening her Force strength enough for Vader not to notice. I was about to add that she would probably naturally block her mind in the presence of this noted Force-user, but it occurs to me: how many people knew Vader could use the Force? It doesn't seem to be any secret in the Empire, but do the Rebels know, too?

Cheree Cargill: Thanks for reminding me about Threepio calling Solo "Han." That's an even better example of my point!

Me: In re-reading the TESB novelization I noticed Lando's aide was described as a "tall bald man" who "wore a radio device that wrapped around the back of his head and covered both his ears." I had assumed he was an android because of the name Lobot (not used in the book) along with the mechanical way he opens his eyes. I do think it would be more intriguing if he were an android; considering most SW-humanoids' feelings about mechanoids, it would be interesting to know what kind of life a human-looking android would lead in such a universe. Oh well.

Tim Blaes: I wonder if one can pick up used lightsabers at antique stores across the galaxy? Kenobi says in the ANH novel: "At one time [lightsabers] were widely used. Still are, in certain galactic quarters." Huh?

And thank you for defending Han in ROTJ. Even a hero has his bad days.

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Rich Gawel: Thanks for the Campbellian reasons behind Ben's decision. Makes sense. But then again, why does Vader say of Luke's sister, "Perhaps she can be turned"? She's not a Jedi yet. Of course he wouldn't know that.

Debbie Kittle: The ROTJ novel explains what the Battle of Tanaab was, but not how Han knew about it, which is the interesting part to me. I'd always assumed it was a battle they both participated in.

Maggie Nowakowska and Cheree: Thanks for sharing your stories about finding SW fandom. I think a lot of us have had similar experiences. I met three of my best friends through fandom (though not sf-related), and even though I lost interest in those fandoms I still have the friends, who mean a lot more to me than any "collector's item" ever did.

Judith Klinger: Your comments about Palpatine intending to convert rather than purge the Jedi were interesting. It is possible he tried but only Vader succumbed.

Maybe Force potential comes into being around puberty. In *ST:TNG* Deanna Troi says a Betazed's empathic/telepathic powers kick in during puberty, because one needs to know how to handle these abilities before one gets them; a baby wouldn't be able to deal with other people's thoughts rushing in. Maybe something similar is at work with Force-sensitivity. Yoda says Luke is "too old" because he thinks he needed training in light side vs. dark side philosophy before he had to make the choice which path to take. Ben, unfortunately, does not give him the philosophy behind the Jedi beliefs first, which sets Luke up for his struggles.

Catherine Churko: I was surprised by Imperial fans, too, but I have to admit they really made me think. There are a lot of innocent people in the Empire who probably consider the Rebels "terrorists," after all. It all depends on your point of view...

Now on to the "question" segment of this LoC...

Why does C3PO say "Thank the Maker"? (In the ROTJ novel he says to Artoo, "May the Maker bless you.") Should we assume from this that the droids have a religion? (Like "Silicon Heaven" in *Red Dwarf*?) None of the humanoid characters — not even the Jedi — refer to a "Maker," so where did Threepio get this concept from? I don't think he meant a literal craftsman.

Where does Leia get all her clothes from? She changes clothes twice on Cloud City; the first time one could make the case that Lando supplied her dress (though suspiciously it's in Republic-Jedi colors), but when did she change from this dress to the white outfit, during torture? And where does she get her Ewok village dress? Was she carrying it with her (why?), or did the Ewoks just happen to have it lying around? Do they have portable clothes replicators in

the SW universe?

In a back issue of SE, I read discussions of whether or not Leia was a virgin. I think she was, but in any case, what about Han's "needs"? If you accept the current Lucasfilm timeline, three years passed between ANH and TESB; I don't think anyone believes Han was sleeping with Leia, so was he "going without"? Or did he look elsewhere? At the end of ANH the state of their relationship was too tentative for me to think he would be waiting for Leia. Were Leia and Han together enough in this time period that she would have seen him dating other women? And how would that have affected their budding relationship? Or did Leia really not know until Hoth how she felt about him?

I've noticed several people refer to the Sith as Dark Jedi. Why? The books refer to Vader as "Lord of the Sith," but that doesn't necessarily imply that all Sith have Force powers. In the movies he thinks of himself as a Jedi, doesn't he? Tarkin says "The Jedi are extinct. You ... are all that's left of their religion."

How many people knew Darth Vader used to be Anakin Skywalker? No one ever meets Luke and says, "Skywalker? You're not Vader's son, are you?" And why would the Emperor want to keep Vader's origins a secret? Seems like good publicity to me.

How is the Rebellion financed?

In a past issue of SE there was discussion of art in the SW universe. Did anyone bring up the half-circle sculpture on Cloud City, seen as Our Heroes walk to their lunch with Vader? Or is this thing just technology?

What did Leia know about her real father? She was grossed out to find out Vader was her father, but she didn't seem to be surprised that Bail Organa wasn't.

What would be the differences between training a Light Jedi and a Dark? The skills are the same, aren't they? Is the difference that a Dark Jedi uses his powers for evil, or that a Dark Jedi's powers are channeled through anger, fear, etc.?

This is a weird question but it's been bugging me for years: as Leia sneaks through Jabba's Palace to free Han from the carbonite, she bumps into a set of windchimes; what are these chimes in the shape of? I think they look like Hutts. Maybe they're Jabba's version of naked-women mudflaps? Or have I just seen this movie too many times?

I've been thinking about Luke seeing his face under Vader's helmet in the Dark Tree on Dagobah and I have yet another theory — is it because Luke sees himself as the "good inside" Vader? That the body/armor is an "illusion," and that when that dies, the good /Luke will be redeemed? Furthermore, is that why Ben wants Luke to kill his dad? Kill the body/save the soul?

I recently watched *The Nun's Story* with Audrey

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Hepburn on cable, and I noticed that as a nun her character was supposed to cut away her family ties — she was not allowed to write them letters, visit, etc. Could this be why Vader doesn't keep his son? Did Palpie tell him he couldn't love anyone more than his Master?

In the ANH novelization it says anthropologists thought Jawas had once been human. Huh?

Needa says of the *Millenium Falcon*, "No ship that small has a cloaking device." I'm no physicist, but it seems to a common layperson like me that it would be easier for a smaller ship to have a cloak than for a larger one to do so, because a small cloak would require less power. Help!

I finally read *Shadows of the Empire* and I liked it. Xizor: superstrong, super-rich, and irresistible to the opposite sex; is there an equivalent male term for "Mary Sue"? "Marv Stu," maybe?

I'd like to leave you with a quote from the ROTJ novelization: "A feeling of fullness, of power, of dark and demon mastery — of secret lusts, unrestrained passion, wild submission — all these things were in Vader's heart as he neared his Emperor." Vader/Palpie??

Happy 1997, everyone!

## THE RIGHT TIME TO KILL VADER

Matthew Whitney  
1003 Allen Street  
Springfield, MA 01118

December 27, 1997

I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season as well as a far more stress-free past few months than I've had. In my last LoC I mentioned a ton of changes in my life, specifically a new teaching assignment, that I was going through. Well, nothing prepared me for the load of \*\*\* that my duties would require. Prepping for teaching a whole new schedule was nothing next to the frustrations involved in the department chair duties. On top of that I enrolled in two night courses, both with killer workloads, plus took the GRE exam in preparation for beginning a master's program. My head is spinning! Fortunately, I've got a generally really nice batch of students this year and the night classes I took, though difficult, were rewarding. By next issue I should have a clearer picture on where I'll do grad school. I'm applying to one school that I really want to get into, but do have a fallback option.

Onto the really important issues . . .

The trailer for the SWSpEd is terrific! The FX look neat (though I think I'll miss the original approach to the DS FX). Just seeing SW on the big screen, even only as a trailer, literally brought a tear to my eye and made me

realize it must be at least 10, maybe 12 years since I saw any of the films on a big screen. With how closely the films are being re-released, it looks as if we'll be living in the theaters all winter. Fine by me!

Lisa Cowan's "SW as Fairy Tale" was a terrific article. Thanks for the reprint, Cheree. It brought home one of my major reasons for being so obsessed with SW: the layers and depth of the story. Like many fans, I was guided toward Joseph Campbell's writing after learning Lucas had drawn from him for inspiration. That branched into other pursuits and spilled over into other fandoms. In a large way it "legitimized" my devoting so much energy toward what others would dismiss as silliness. Also, due to my age at the time, it deepened my appreciation for ST when I went back to look at that series. So, I'll be eagerly looking forward to the rest of this series of articles.

Cheree, I can see how you might feel caught between a rock and a hard place in re whether you should add your own LoC to the discussions. Do feel free to add as many parenthetical comments you want, though. They are *always* welcome!

Picking up on one of those comments and the topic Marlene Karkoska was discussing: the right (?) time to kill Vader. I'm strongly reminded of Gandalf's comment that Gollum might have a role to play in the War of the Ring that none could foretell. I do think OWK manipulated Luke into facing Vader, but do not think he had a chance to kill the Sith Lord aboard the first DS. When he set out to disable the tractor field, he clearly knew Vader was aboard and that the two would meet in a duel to the death. Next, in the saber duel, OWK was not toying with him nor was he fighting a defensive battle to gain time. Each was out to kill the other, but the arrival of stormtroopers altered this plan. Kenobi saw that he would not be able to make a quick escape if he did defeat Vader and surely knew that Luke would not abandon him. Since the survival of Luke — OWK's hope for restoring the Jedi — was his prime motivator, he cast aside his plan to destroy Vader and offered himself up as a sacrifice. This had a two-fold benefit: distracting Vader from pursuing the others and while also freeing Luke to escape the DS.

I do not think it was clear that Kenobi could defeat Vader at the time of ANH. Analyzing their skills (and making a major assumption that Ben was not using the duel only to delay and distract Vader from Luke and the others), I don't think Ben showed a clear advantage in technical skill. As much as I love the scene for its drama and emotion, I would rather not nitpick the swordsmanship of either actor. Sir Alec is a brilliant actor, and it is acting that sells this scene, not his deftness with a sword. I think it was Dave who played Vader for these scenes (I know in ROTJ Bob Anderson did most of the saber/stunt work), and his performance was necessarily constrained by the

physical skill of his opponent. So, even if they wanted to bring a master stunt double in for Dave, he would still have to scale down his performance to match Guinness. That said, I think the film tried to convey the struggle as a virtual even match. Each got in some good moves, but neither had an upper hand. The duel would have gone on for some time if not for the arrival of Luke and the others. Thus, I do not think OWK passed up an opportunity to kill Vader — he was trying to but events “forced” him into a different action.

What if OWK did not sacrifice himself? Would Luke have taken a pot shot at Vader, essentially shooting him in the back? I think not since it would have been a decidedly dishonorable act, totally out of character for Luke. He would have known Ben would not have approved, and one of Luke’s major motivations at this stage was the approval of Kenobi. Han might have (whoa boy, here comes the hate mail). Han’s motivation would have been kill-before-being-killed, just like wasting Greedo. While I am casting aspersions on the ethics of our heroes, I wonder if Luke shot any of those troopers in the back? Probably not, but only because his shout of denial caused them all to turn. He certainly was not concerned with the chivalric code at that moment, though.

Did the stormtroopers arrive on Tatooine only after the opening space battle? I think there was a local garrison who were either reinforced from the Star Destroyer or officers were sent to coordinate the search. The troopers showed up at the escape pod site aboard dewbacks, which I assume is native to Tatooine and may have been utilized by that local garrison. It would be unlikely that fresh troops went down to the planet and made a first stop at Hertz Rent-A-Lizard. So, I’d wager all or nearly all the troopers we see on Tatooine had been stationed there, much like our nations station troops at all their satellite holdings.

Gerald Crotty: Your wonderings about the prequels, specifically that Mrs. Skywalker had been suspected of unfaithfulness, would make a great approach. It would add a terrific, *Othello*-like tragic element.

John Fredericks: You’ve got to convince your wife that SW/ST/media ties are not only “tasteful,” they are definitely in current style. I’ve got loads of “accountant” ties, but it is the media ties that buys me points with the kids as not being a “stick in the mud.” Look at all the modern art influenced ties out there, can SW be worse? As a testament of how far we’ve come, I’ve even started seeing “media” ties in traditional mall stores rather than just at cons or in catalogs. Fun stuff!

Chris Graham: Why would Luke want to join the Academy Biggs went off to? I’ve always assumed this to be tied to the Empire. It could be a “Merchant Marine Academy” and thus a civilian institution. Even so, with the

strength and pervasiveness of the Empire it seems logical that any academy that trained space pilots would be either controlled or guided by the Empire. Luke wanted any ticket off Tatooine that he could get his hands on, and if it meant selling himself into Imperial service for a three-year stint, or some such arrangement, so be it. Many a student who has graduated from my school and straight into the military has done so without a drop of patriotic blood. Some have even been vocally anti-government, but were willing to put up with the system so long as they got their vocational training, college money, or just out of their current environment — whatever their agenda. Some might have even thumbed their nose at the government as they walk away from the service, flaunting that they used the system for their own ends. I’m only stating my impression of the way things are. Further, that this is possibly paralleled in the SW universe does not bother me, and could well be Luke’s motivation. He has no love for the Empire but could be willing to sign up to get off Tatooine. And maybe he naively thinks his presence in the Imperial ranks would make a difference.

Which leads me to . . . we’ve often debated the reasons why the Empire is viewed as evil, of what actions is it guilty of pre-ANH to warrant being overthrown? My question is: What of this evil nature would Luke have known of? If the Empire is so all-powerful that they can control thousands of worlds, I’d doubt they’d advertise their atrocities and would have the means to keep under wraps whatever information they chose. (Nazi Germany did not advertise blatantly the details of the holocaust.) Luke’s anti-Imperial leanings could well stem from a harsh tariff policy and the arrogant, bully-boy actions of the local stormtrooper garrison. So, his wanting to join an Imperial academy could be looked at through his provincial eyes, rather the more galaxy-wise vision of a Leia, Han, Mon Mothma, and so on.

Could this also explain Han’s supposed military background?

Tim Blaes: Haunted lightsabers . . . Cool idea! They could be infused with the evil, dark side aura of their former owners. Question: how many dark siders were there? We know of Darth and Palpatine, and I guess the pro-novels are introducing others (I’ve read VERY few of these — So many books, so little time). My take on it is that the Jedi were overcome by treachery and numbers, but not an equal force of dark siders.

Debbie Kittle: Re the TESB Hallmark calendar, no — I only got the ANH 96 version. I’m currently shopping for a 97 calendar, and may get one of the SW ones on the market. I did finally see the 3D *Falcon* puzzle at a store called Media Play. This is a book, video, music, computer super store. Talk about one stop shopping! Between it and the HUGE new Barnes & Noble in my area, I’m definitely

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going to go broke!

General comments on CGI FX: like many I prefer the realism that can be conveyed with really good model/miniature work. The aforementioned ANH scene, when the X-Wings approach the DS and “lock air spoils in attack position” is FABULOUS — and any reworking for the SpEd is going to damage it. Sure, George was limited on the number of ships he could put in frame, but the “effect” that was achieved was that we were seeing just the first few of a large squadron preparing for the battle. Our imaginations supplied the rest of the “visuals.” More is not going to be better. That is what I think CGI is good for: filling out large shots, while models are far better (at least now, at this point in the evolution of the technology) for details.

Neither technology is perfect, and any of us could point to dozens of shots in any of the films that are flawed. The key, however, is that very few of these flaws were noticeable until we’d seen the films a few times and could let our attention wander from the story to the details of the FX. This shows why I’ve never been a fan of Harryhausen’s films. I respect him as an animator, but the films are (IMO) so dreadfully bad in terms of pacing, dialog, and above-all the weak performances turned in by the actors that I find them virtually unbearable. I don’t think the reworkings of any of the three SW films will turn out like this — where the revamped FX overwhelm the stories. Hopefully, George has not grown to love the technology so much that it clouds his talent as a story teller.

I’d certainly not planned to end on a pessimistic note, but there it is. So, I will restate that I am breathlessly looking forward to seeing the films again in the theater! For me, it is already the film event of the decade — and I plan to feel like a little kid all over again.

Follow the Force!

## SORTING OUT MY LIFE

A. G. Steyn  
Paul-Ruecker-St. 69  
47059 Duisburg  
Germany

December 15, 1996

I’m back. For those who missed me (and the vast majority who didn’t): I had to sort out my life and therefore skipped a LoC in the last issue of S.E.

How I’m doing? Hm, fairly well, all things considered. Crashed my car into a billboard at the local filling station

while trying to maneuver backwards. My rear wheels got on wet grass, lost their grip, the car jumped back way too fast and WHAMMO!

Unfortunately my insurance only covered the (*minor*) damage done to the billboard. The repairs on my Ford I had to pay out of my own pockets: DM 6115 !!! Excuse me, but now I have to scream. EEEEEEEEEAAAAAHHH!!!

Had a great time in the US, visiting a lot of wonderful fellow StarWarriors: Ming, Minky and Leanne Wingo. Thanks, pals! You’ve all been wonderful hosts.

Went to see the Omnimax show on special effects at the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theater in Balboa Park/San Diego. And while there was nothing surprisingly new about the way these spfx were done (we’ve all seen it before), it sure was nice to see some glimpses of the new scenes for ANH. And to see the *Falcon* make the jump to hyperspace on the giant half-domed screen (with an almost 3-D effect) was something else!

And now...

Marlene Karkoska: Aside from not being hooked up to the Internet (and will not be for a very long time to come), I must admit I do not really like the idea of turning out stories via the net. There is already enough piracy in the fanzine business. How can we make sure that stories are not stolen or willfully distorted by mean-spirited folks? Computers make manipulation a cinch.

Oh yeah, glad you liked my “Surprise...” story. Thanks.

Gerald Crotty: Yup, you got it, pal. Fully agree with your view on Han in ROTJ. What made him sit next to Her Highness like a little lapdog? Where did his spunk go? And about ROTJ in general: If I had been asked on how to enhance that movie, my suggestion would have read:

- (a) drop the Ewoks
- (b) get rid of Max Rebo
- (c) let Boba escape from the Sarlacc and take after Han

— now in an act of personal revenge. That would have added another dimension to the battle on Endor: Luke fighting Daddy and His Imperial Shrivelfacedness on the Death Star, Lando battling the Imp Navy in Space, Leia and Chewie battling the ground troops on Endor... and everybody’s fave Corellian running for his life — and finally (backed into a corner) battling everybody’s fave bounty hunter. Many possibilities here... Why didn’t Lucas see them?

Jerjerrod ... Jer..k... Man, you got a sick mind. You’re my kind of scum — tasteless and inventive. Welcome to the gutter, honey.

About the Brits not looking good... I stand corrected. I plumb forgot that we did see Jeremy Bulloch in a double role (Boba *and* an Imp Lieut) — and I do like his looks. Handsome fellow. Too bad they keep putting that Mandalorean bucket over his head.

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Summer Movies: *Twister* had one great line... "That's no moon, it's a space station..." That killed me.

Chris Graham: Uh, I do not think that Yoda, by saying about the Force "Life creates it, makes it grow", did try to express that the Force is created by life, but rather the opposite: that life is created by the Force.

Remember, Yoda spoke with a peculiar grammar.

OK, and here comes a (admittedly very sleazy) "what if" regarding the breaking-up between Anakin and Ben. What if Ben had more than just a religious interest in the young man he was training? What if Kenobi, thought of as a pious old monk living in celibacy, was actually suffering from the Michael Jackson syndrome? What if he just couldn't stand the thought of Anakin lusting for a gorgeous woman and maybe even planning on having a real family of his own? Yeah, I know it's far out and certainly not what old man Lucas has in mind for his prequels, but it would make for an awfully interesting storyline...

On the subject of 3PO: The silver leg may just be an indicator that the droid has not just rolled off the assembly line but has been through a lot of action in his "life". But other questions remain... like the one about his eyes, or why he yelps "ow!" several times during the trilogy. Does he really feel pain, or is that a humanized reaction programmed into his systems that automatically kicks in when there is damage done to him? About the stormtrooper blast blowing him into his component parts: Could it be that the makers of the droid already foresaw some raw action for their products, and hence manufactured a hull that would conveniently break at certain points, making reassembly a cinch?

About the academy: If we follow the source books, then the academy is definitely Imperial. But maybe the Imperial Army / Navy does draft the best of the bunch into the service after they have completed their education? All Biggs (and Tank, and Luke) wanted was the general training, after which they probably wanted to hire on with the rebellion (remember, Biggs planned to jump ship and had already made arrangements, according to the radio version of ANH).

Rich Gawel: Regarding HF... I'm glad you're here to tell us these things! Hey, the person who called in on that show about "P... with celebs" was a typical *guy*. A girl would never waste her time making notes on such insignificant things as "wiggling". We want to know the essentials...

Uh, yeah — Dear Ed is right: the guy you saw on *Babblestar Ponderosa* (Bucko's dad, Chameleon) was Fred Astaire. But yes, he could easily have come from Corellia. Must be a big planet....

Debbie Kittle: 1996 was pure *horror!* And if 1997 doesn't get better, I'll shoot myself (and that's a promise). And I do not want any blizzards. Keep'em in your house,

dearie!

Makes sense someone like you should come up with a carbon freezing chamber. Brrrrr! You Wampa, you.

OK, gotta run. Sorry, but this LoC can't be any longer (do I hear Dear Ed yell hooray?).

I owe several of you guys letters — and I will write them soon. Promised.

Looking forward to hearing from you folks in the next SE.

## THE YEAR OF STAR WARS

Debbie Kittle  
11521 Idlewood Rd.  
Silver Spring, MD 20906

January 25, 1997

It is hard to believe that by the time the next issue of SE comes, we'll have seen the re-release. I can hardly wait not only to see what they've done but just to see it on the big screen. 1997 is going to be the Year of SW!!

Taco Bell, Pepsi, Pizza Hut are all doing promos. I think it's great just to see it all having missed it the first time around.

I took the plunge right before Xmas and bought WebTV so now not only can I get e-mail (my address should be in with the others) but can now cruise the WWW and I'm loving all this instantaneous communication even overseas. Now onto the letters.

Marlene: I've told Mary Jo about all the pleas to return but so far, she's not budging. She's on-line regularly and checks out the fanfiction pages. Maybe you should contact her directly.

As you stated to Gerald "Jabba doesn't look fat enough or ugly enough."

I think the years from ANH to ROTJ were unkind to Jabba and he became that way by the time ROTJ happened. I'm really looking forward to that new Han and Jabba scene.

Matthew: Glad you were able to get the math teacher job.

I'm sorry that the "Infinite Visions" SW/ST con was such a bust for you. I agree that they should've advertised about the autographs (they didn't for us either) but we only had two SW guests and luckily, I had already seen all the ST ones.

We also opted for regular seats but Dave's invitation was met by no resistance on our part nor did security intervene.

Though there were a decent amount of people there, it wasn't a mob scene, so our Trek guests gave regular



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seaters an autograph. Infinite Visions should've stated all those things up front to avoid disappointment, frustration and anger.

Cheryl: Rumors? Never! Only the truth. Boy, did you just skip over the DragonCon bit! For all you *National Enquirer* people — Cheryl spent quite a few long hours with his Dark Sithship and unchaperoned at that!

No trick photography. If I could, I'd have a photo of me and you know who!

Suzanne: Glad to see you in the pages of SE. I've gotten and read the third *Blackfleet* book and thought this guy let us down quite a bit in the form of story and characterizations.

Chris: Too many questions and not enough time or paper. But you did bring up some interesting points like "teleport". I'll just add comments on a few: Jabba knew Luke was coming because of the holo R2 played. I think I read that the *Millennium Falcon* has 3 cybernetic-type brains that are linked together causing confusion at times and it seems to fit since the ship seems tempermental.

I think Darth Vader found out via spies about Luke but wanted to keep it a secret hoping to confront him before Palpie found out.

For anyone interested in coming to the Air & Space Museum SW exhibit later this year and next, please write or e-mail me at some point. I know I'll probably be there at least monthly or more and would be happy to meet some of you and take you on a tour or help with hotel reservations. I can't wait for this to open. The mini exhibit they had was nice. They had some 12 McQuarrie prints on display as well as R2, C3PO and a trooper in a glass case.

'Til next issue when we discuss TESB and ROTJ, Fly Casually In The Force.

## BOYCOTT PRO CONS

Pat Grant  
2343 N. Cedar St., Apt. A  
Holt, MI 48842

Gee, once again I have missed sending an LoC for an issue. It seems like I always go to write my letter and realize I'm at least a month past deadline! Where does the time go? Well, there are a couple of comments I want to make in reference to issue #45, so I'll do that now, and then respond to #46 as soon as it arrives.

First of all, I want to thank everyone for their well-wishing on my recovery. The neck surgery went well. In fact, it was technically called out-patient surgery, which surprised the heck out of me. I was kept in the hospital

only over night, for "observation" and sent home the next day. I was off work for 2 months, though. It was very boring and wreaked havoc with my finances and budget, but all-in-all everything went well and, boy, was I relieved when they took the final x-ray just one week before MWC and told me I'd healed well and wouldn't need any more surgery. There was a chance I was going to be in the hospital during the convention. Thank God for my mutant healing ability!

Well, only some brief comments from issue #45:

Marlene Karkoska: Sorry to hear you didn't like *Before the Storm*. I couldn't disagree more. I thoroughly enjoyed this book (and the second book, *Shield of Lies*). And I felt he did a great job with characterizations. Why did Leia get to be so unpopular? I think you missed something. Leia still had quite a large group of supporters. She simply had a couple of people in high positions who were against her, who had hidden agendas of their own, and who were able to convince a lot of people to see things from their point of view. And right at the beginning, she had Nil Spaar purposefully causing things to happen to make her look bad. Politics can turn ugly — look at our own elections. And when the opposition can't find skeletons in your closet, they do what they can to create them. Leia became unpopular due to political maneuvering. Also keep in mind, this situation will surely resolve in the third book. I'm sure Leia will come off back at the top in the end. As for Luke — why not become a hermit? I found myself thinking the same as you at first, but I have to say, he makes quite an argument. If Luke "comes to the rescue" every time they want him, or if he is simply there by their sides all the time, how would they ever reach their own achievements? People would never push themselves to their limits because they wouldn't need to. And I can see Luke's *need* for solitude. Also, keep in mind here, he is voicing his opinions and beliefs at the time. Nothing remains as it is forever. After a time I am sure Luke would begin missing his friends and family, and after he is sure they no longer would expect him to fix their every problem, he would eventually begin making visits again. However, I do agree with your comment about the Solo kids. I really don't like the way anyone writes them. (And I hate their names!)

I highly recommend these books! (And many of you know how much I've disliked the other professional books out there.) I find these books refreshing and exciting. If you are into court intrigue, military politics vs. governmental politics, evil enemies with no redeeming value, and great battle scenes, these books are for you.

John Fredericks: I agree with you and Maggie about the lack of Lando in virtually everything pro and most fan fic. However, if you haven't read the books I just mentioned above, you might want to check them out. Lando plays a

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major part in them. The action in the books is divided basically into 3 areas and Lando is the center of one of them.

A. G. Steyn: Regarding your comparisons of SW locations to real world locations, I think Hoth would be more comparable to the frozen arctic, closer to the poles than to Alaska. Of course, we didn't see the entire planet, but what we did see would make me think it is totally frozen over all the time. Alaska actually is quite beautiful and has lots of trees and greenery. And Dagobah could either be the Florida Everglades or the Louisiana swamps. And regarding the zoology of Hoth, I don't understand how anything could be native to that desolate world. I realize that the Wampa had to be, but how could it exist? What would it eat? I don't believe that taun-tauns were native. I think the Alliance may have brought them in. But maybe they were native. Again, what do they eat? Somewhere along the food chain there has to be herbivores, and I didn't see any sign of natural vegetation. Is it possible Hoth has a seasonal rotation and the Alliance simply got stuck there during winter? Perhaps the herbivores store their food in internal food sacks and live "off their fat" throughout the winter. The carnivores of course could continue to hunt and eat the herbivores. I never have liked the SW stigma that each planet has one, and only one, type of weather and vegetation. Why should Earth be unique in its planet-wide diversity?

Ye Editor: Ha ha ha! I laughed for several minutes after reading your response to my comments on what to call SW fans. Ha ha ha ha ha...

Matthew Whitney: Geez, you were 15 when ANH opened? God, I feel old! I can't help laughing, though, whenever this subject comes up and I see the looks on people's faces when I tell them I graduated from college the year before ANH opened! I run into this more with my group, Forces of the Empire, of which most members are closer to your age and younger. (We have 5 members who were born in years after ANH opened!). I'm glad there are plenty of SE writers in my generation! ((Ed: *This morning one of the attorneys at the law firm I work for was talking about SW. She commented that she was 8 when SW came out. I answered that I was 24. I'll be 44 on March 1. Do you feel like a dinosaur, Pat? I do sometimes!*))

Catriona Campbell: I find myself agreeing with a lot of what you have to say, and I must say that I really identify with the comment, "In some ways, though, I feel lost in this new SW galaxy..." Me, too. I feel like, even though I don't like them, I now *have* to go buy all the books and read them, just so I know what everyone else is talking about. I feel like here we are, the "older" fans, who have been around writing stories, putting together zines and running clubs, and keeping the Saga alive all this time, and now a whole new generation has come along, stepped in

and taken over, and changed everything. I guess I feel sort of ... obsolete! \*shudder\*

Tim Blaes: You're such a riot! Imagine ... Luke using the Kaiburr Crystal as a paperweight! Ha ha ha! Geez, I can almost see it!

Your *Beauty and the Beast/Gargoyles* crossover sounds great — if anyone ever writes it, I'd love to read it! How about this for a crossover: *Kindred: the Embraced/X-Files*, or how about *Highlander/X-Files*? You know, Scully and Mulder are sent to investigate the scene of a couple of headless corpses... ((Ed: *Did anyone catch that hilarious Simpsons/X-Files episode? We nearly laughed ourselves sick! I'm just sorry I didn't tape it! You can bet the old VCR will be humming when it comes back in reruns!*))

Gerald Crotty: YES! GIVE CHEWIE A MEDAL!

Rich Gawel: I loved your comments comparing SW and *X-Files*. Yes, I'm also an X-Phile.

Louise Turner: I really loved meeting you at MWC! And I'm glad you enjoyed the Cantina. Will you be back next year? I hope so!

Okay, my copy of issue #46 arrived today (11/30) so now, onto #46:

Z. P.: I think it's sad, but I agree with you. It will be hard to please most of us (regarding the next movies). On one hand I feel sorry for Lucas... We've all developed such ideas of how things were in time before SW:ANH — count the number of fans and that's how many different preconceived ideas there are — that he is going to have as many people dislike the movies as those how like them. On the other hand, it's his own fault for taking so long to do them that he gave us the time for our imaginations to run wild. I'm going to try to go in with as open a mind as possible. In fact, I plan to rewatch the entire trilogy the day before I see the first new movie and then go into it trying to take ONLY what happened in those movies with me.

Yes, I swear ... there was an interview with Carrie Fisher in *TV Guide* and in the interview she did say that Lucas asked her to help write the scenes with Luke and Leia's mother. Carrie has become quite the author lately, and I guess he feels she would have some insight into the character and do a good job writing her. Didn't anyone else see this article? If someone keeps their *TV Guides* and has this interview (Carrie was on the cover, I think), I'd love to get a photocopy of it. ((Ed: *I'll verify this! I read it, too! I can just see Luke and Leia's mother in a violent argument with Anakin. "I did not lift my skirt at the Enclave meeting! Obi-Wan Kenobi just made it TWIRL up!"*))

Marlene Karkoska: I agree that I'd like to read what Cheree has to say in the pages of SE. I enjoy her occasional comments and would love to hear more. (Cheree, I understand your feeling that an editor should

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stay in the background as a moderator and not dominate the conversation, but since SE is the only letterzine of its type that I get, or even that exists to my knowledge, where else can we hear from you? Why not take a vote? I vote that you should include a LoC from yourself in any issue you choose. At the very least, don't feel guilty about the comments you put in... We love them!)

((Ed: Okay, I'll try to stick a LoC or at least an editorial commentary in now and then. Would you believe that sometimes I don't have time to write to my own letterzine? I'm a terrible correspondent! Meanwhile, you can look forward to my usual running-off-at-the-brain comments inserted here and there.))

Gee, I wish I had the ability to go on-line! It sounds like you are all having *so much* fun! I am not on-line yet but hope to be someday. There is a chance I might be by next June. You mentioned that it was interesting that most on-line authors use stuff from the pro-novels and most fanzine authors don't. I have a theory about that. Fanzines have been around since the movies came out and the authors are used to writing with only the movies in mind. Even new writers, who will read a few zines before submitting a story, will tend to write in a similar vein. Whereas the on-line services are quite new, and as you said, most of them have never heard of a fanzine. So the only post-movie literature they've been exposed to is the pro-material and so they have all the new material fresh on their minds and go with it.

I'm glad to hear you liked *Shield of Lies*. I was dismayed to hear all the negative comments about the first book, as it was the first pro novel I've actually liked. And I have a feeling that all the things people had problems with in the first book will be resolved by the third. I, too, am looking forward to it.

Thanks (and to Debbie Kittle, too) for clearing up for me that TRU is "Toys R Us". I guess I should have figured that out, but I've just never heard it called that before.

When I said that Kenobi may not have killed Vader on the Death Star because he didn't feel the time was right for it, I meant that he must have felt there would be much more impact and effect from his death if he left him for Luke to deal with. But, I like Cheree's comments on the subject, which take my idea a bit further and really make more sense (see, Cheree, we need your comments!).

You make a good argument for Tatooine being a remote rimworld.

Regarding your comment to Debbie Kittle, I agree that we all need to respect one another's viewpoints and to be more tolerant. I know I can be quite opinionated myself, but I hope everyone realizes that while I am being excited and exuberant about voicing my views, especially if they are in contradiction to someone else's views, that I still respect their views, and I expect them to voice their

disagreement with me! While I enjoy spouting my viewpoints, I'd be the first to admit that I don't necessarily believe that "I'm right and you're wrong." Besides, in disagreement, things we've overlooked can be pointed out to us, and so we learn.

And I, too, miss Mary Jo Fox.

Matthew Whitney: As far as the novelizations not being canon, how can they not be? Now, I'm not speaking about all the novels out on the market, only the novelizations of the three movies. They are pretty much just the movies in written form, but by being the nature that they are, they contain more information than you can squeeze into two hours on film. And besides, the first novelization *Star Wars* was written by George Lucas himself, so it had to mesh with his plan at the time it was written. The quotes I mentioned the last time were from that book, and were written by George Lucas.

No, I would not want to see SW done in the 50's as far as bad FX would go. I believe I had referred to the fact that there were some wonderful actors at the time whom I think would have been great in the parts. The comment was a continuation of a discussion about Gene Kelly. But you're right, it would be awful with those tacky 50's FX! ((Ed: Okay, let's think about casting a 50's version of SW. Particularly with 50's sf stars, not major movie stars — Leslie Nielsen as Luke Skywalker, Anne Francis as Princess Leia (in short, revealing costumes), Walter Pidgeon as Obi-Wan Kenobi, Robby the Robot as C3PO. Okay, folks, help me out here. I'm short on names — think *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*, *Them!*, *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, *The Deadly Mantis*, *Tarantula!*, and all those other wonderful bad black and white sf movies. I was thinking *Forbidden Planet* when I cast the four above. Let's have your favorites!))

I share your disappointment with pro cons. Your main complaints were with "Infinite Visions" but I feel as strongly about Creation Cons. This "IV" does sound really bad though. You're right — all any of them are interested in is the Almighty Dollar. At Creation Cons the stars were only signing photos you buy at the convention. I've never run into the regular vs. preferred tickets. It seems like this is their way of saying "If you're a *real* fan, you'll pay extra and get their autographs." I find this ludicrous and can't believe the stars we know and love are going along with this! Many fans earn poor salaries and it takes everything they can save just to afford the expense of tickets and hotels, not to mention the outrageous entry fees, and then to have to shell out more money for pro photos or preferred tickets ... it's really sad that fandom has come to this. The fan run conventions are becoming fewer and farther between, and they're the only ones worth going to. I miss the days of walking around a con and bumping into your favorite star, say in the dealers' room, and being able to

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actually *talk* to them. As for autographs, if there are just too many people at the con to sign for all of them, why not schedule two or three autograph sessions, and hand out (free) tickets to each one so that you can attend only one session, and that way it would shorten the lines and give them a break in between.

The pro cons are fulfilling their goals of taking over. I no longer will attend them. I boycott them. No loss, they're not much fun anyway. I think if more fans would boycott them to the point of nearly putting them out of business, then and only then would they listen to our complaints. The Dollar talks. Boycott pro cons, no matter who's the guest! And be sure to write the stars with your complaints. If they began to get lots of mail on this, maybe they'd start backing the fans too. Unfortunately, many of the fans are new to fandom, and have never been to a fan run convention, and don't know what they're missing. So they probably wouldn't want to get involved in a fan-wide boycott.

I agree, it is going to be great being back in the theaters with SW films again (well, by the time this issue of SE comes out, it will have already have happened)! In fact, this past Friday we went to the theater for the opening of *Star Trek: First Contact* and there was a *huge* standee advertising the coming release. It really warmed my heart to see it!

Marti Schuller: So you're also a *Hercules* and *Xena* fan. Me, too! Have you seen any of the latest in that line of shows — *Sinbad*? I like it too, although not quite as much. They're all a lot of fun. And in regards to Cheree's comment, I also love *Dark Skies*. *Millennium* is growing on me, but I don't feel like a fan yet. The other show I'm really enjoying is *Poltergeist: The Legacy*. Although I think they should just shorten the title to *The Legacy*, I realize this has been around on cable for a while, but I didn't have cable until recently, so I'm new to the show. I *love* it! Anyone else? What, if anything, ties it to the *Poltergeist* movies? I didn't like them, and almost didn't watch this because of that. But it is quite different and very enjoyable. If it has nothing to do with the movies, then they should definitely shorten the title.

Gerald Crotty: I agree that the Emperor developed his ugliness by overuse of the Dark Side. That's always been my pet theory, although I enjoy hearing other peoples' ideas on this. I think Ian McDiarmid should also be cast as Palpatine in the next movies. Only since it is earlier in time, we should see him as looking more human-ish. (Hey, Ian, less makeup!)

Sorry, I can't help you with the name of that time-loop novel you mentioned. I've not run across it. If you like stories dealing with time, I still highly recommend the two I mentioned last time. I think you'd really like them.

Regarding your comments to Catriona: Would Luke

feel the deaths of those on the Death Star? When Alderaan was destroyed, you'll remember that Luke didn't notice anything. Only Ben caved in. I think it was because he was so well versed in the ways of the Force. I don't think Luke felt anything at the destruction of the Death Star in the first movie anymore than he did for Alderaan. But, by the third movie, I think he would have felt the loss of the lives on that Death Star. Although, and please refresh my memory on this as I haven't (gasp!) watched the movies in quite some time ... Was the DS in the third movie not equipped with only a skeleton crew of sorts since it was not completed (even if it was fully functional)? Granted that even a skeleton crew on that thing would probably number in the thousands.

John Fredericks: You asked how long was OWK on Tatooine? I hope that's a question that will be answered in the new movies. Who knows? I've always had the idea that OWK went there to take the baby Luke to Owen and Beru, and that he had decided to stay there, out-of-the-way, yet ready to run to the rescue if anything *did* happen while Luke was growing up. I think his sole purpose in life at that point was to be there as Luke's protector and eventual teacher, because he *did* see Luke as being their "only hope." I think he could stay remote because he would know through the Force if Luke's life was ever in danger.

Cheryl Pryor: (And I know there was at least one other person who mentioned this, but damned if I can find the comment now!) So you think the bake sale would be a good idea? How about a joint SE/FOE bake sale. I'll advertise it in our newsletter as well. Anyone who wants to take time to bake something right before the con is welcome to come over to my place (my house is literally about 3/4 of a mile down the street on the same side of the street even, as the con hotel) and we can have a baking party on either Tuesday or Wednesday night (or both) — Thursday night I'm sure we all want to be *at* the hotel. If anyone is interested in this let me know and I'll organize it. Half the final proceeds could go to SE and half to FOE. Or we could keep separate sales totals for each group. There is one problem, though. We would not, after all, be able to do it in the cantina or in any convention function space. Hotel rules forbid the use or sale of any food or beverage items not bought directly from the hotel in those areas. Therefore, we would need someone with a room willing to donate their room for this activity. If necessary, we could limit it to a one-day event and put up posters. Just for fun, we could even give it a funny name, *i.e.* "The Retired Jedi Ladies Baking Guild Bake Sale" or something like that. Any ideas? Because of time limits, any ideas or comments will have to be sent to me personally instead of waiting for the next SE issue, so that we can organize this in time if we're going to do it. I will check with the girl running the dealer's room and dealer's hall this year to see if they'd

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have any objection to us doing this, without having to pay for a dealer's room fee. I'll point out that FOE is already paying for a dealer's table in the dealer's room. I think SE is too (Cheree, let me know asap if this is the case). And, if we only do it for one day, I don't think they'd have any objections. So let me know your ideas — especially if you want me to organize baking parties at my place and when. And I especially need a volunteer for a room in which to hold it. ((*Ed: Contact Judy Yuenger about the possibility of holding the sale in the SW Dealer's Suite. This might be an ideal place. Judy? And I'm not sure yet if I'll have a table this year or not. We hadn't planned on coming this year so I didn't pre-register or anything, but now it looks as if Katy and I will come. So, I'm running a bit late on all the setup.*))

Cheryl Pryor, Suzanne Godsalve, (and a few other people as well): In regards to various comments about Luke in *Before the Storm*, I think you're possibly seeing him in too much of a two-dimensional light. He would have many sides to him as we all do. Look into your own lives. Have you ever been so overwhelmed by some project, inundated with demands on your time and energy, so much so that you've become "burned out" and had to get away? Possibly not even caring anymore whether that project ever got completed or not? I think this is the state that the author was trying to portray Luke as being in. When you reach that state, all you can think of is getting away. As Luke saw it there were others equipped well enough to take over for him. Luke left, with all intentions of never returning. But just because that was his intention, that doesn't mean that he wouldn't come back. Even if this thing about looking for his mother hadn't come up, I think eventually he would have begun to miss his family and friends, and he would become bored. He simply had acted on the spur of the moment and voiced feelings and opinions he felt strongly about at the time but which surely would have changed later. I honestly believe that all the problems everyone seems to have with the characterizations in the first book are already being resolved to a point in the second book and will be redeemed in the third book. Give the story a chance to finish itself. I think that all the author has been doing in these books is taking the characters and smacking them in the face with "real life" events, and wrote about how they would handle them. In the situations portrayed, I feel he's done a great job with them. And I especially like his handling of Lando and Lobot.

Chris Graham: Did Ben ever try getting permission to train Leia since Owen objected to him training Luke? IMO — no, I don't think he ever even considered it. I base this opinion on the infamous line "That boy is our only hope."

Tim Blaas: Well, about my *Highlander* RPG, I've shelved the project for now. I heard awhile back that

Fundercastle Games was going to put one out (finally). Then when I got my program book for Gen Con, it was listed as a premiering game and there were trial gaming sessions you could sign up for. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the convention so I don't know if they followed through on this or not. Nor have I seen a copy anywhere in any gaming stores. So until I find out if there is a pro game or not, I don't want to do anything more with mine. Of course, if they do have one out but you can't get hold of it, what use is it? In that case, I'll do mine anyway. I planned on just doing it up like a zine and selling it at conventions. I'll be happy to bring my own personal copy of my game to MWC if you want to take a look at it. I'd even be willing (provided I can find the time) to run a game of it, if for no other reason than to get opinions on it. And you can feel free to play that sword swinging warrior nun if you really want to! As for it being expanded to other fandoms, I don't think so. It is pretty precise in dealing with things like the Quickening and all that. As for the determining of a character's age and immortality, I suppose you could double it as a RPG for, say, *Forever Knight*. Yes, player characters can just be about anything immortal or mortal. I figure you could have a gaming group composed of an Immortal and his mortal "sidekicks", i.e. *Highlander* when Duncan's friends were Richie and Amanda.

I'm sorry to hear about Harlan Ellison's having heart trouble, especially having to have quadruple bypass surgery. I may not like the man, but I wouldn't wish that on anyone and I hope he recovered well.

Gee, I guess I'll have to work on that SW/Oz play now! You can gladly have a part in it. If I do get it done, there will be plenty of parts for everyone. Now, I'm not promising anything but I will try to finish!

Regarding Leia and her not allowing herself emotional relief, I'd like to make a comment. We all deal with grief in our own ways. We don't even know ourselves how we are going to react until it happens and each circumstance is different than any before it. In my own life, I've never had to deal with grief strongly, as I've always had a firm belief in the afterlife. I know I will miss them, but I also know that they are in a much better place and that I will see them again. I have no doubts in that. I got through my mother's death with slight grief reactions, and I made it through my father's funeral pretty much the same. I had to. I was the one in both cases who had to hold the family together, I made all the funeral arrangements in both cases (and I was only 15 when my mother died), so I had to be strong, and my beliefs helped a lot. So I have full understanding of how Leia was capable of holding up under the stress, although I realize her loss was immensely larger than mine. However, I was surprised by just what grief can do to you. I was working at K-Mart at the time of my father's death.

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About four months later, when I was pretty much back to “normal” life, I went to help a customer one day. The man looked a lot like my Dad. He asked me a question and I couldn’t answer. I went into a sort of state of shock. The poor man must have been terribly confused. I wasn’t thinking it was my Dad, I knew he wasn’t. But I was completely *not* in control of myself. I was told by my doctor that it was my mind finally allowing itself to grieve. (And in true K-Mart fashion, they wanted me back at work the next day. In fact, they didn’t want me to leave *that* day!) So, I’m sure that at some point after ROTJ, Leia would deal with her grief, whether she allowed it or not. Once shock, and responsibility (I have a job to do and they’re all relying on me) has worn off, grief will come, bidden or not.

Rich Gawel: Glad to find another *Highlander* fan. I’ve never seen the Victoria’s Secrets commercial. Any chance you’ll be at MWC next year? If so, could you bring the tape so I could see it? I’ve heard a lot about it. And, yes, I also think that actor on BG was Fred Astaire, although it’s been a long time, so I wouldn’t swear to it.

To everyone: Have you seen that K-Mart TV commercial with Rosie O’Donnell and Penny Marshall where Rosie has Darth Vader make a pass at Barbie? It’s hysterical! (“Come to the Dark Side, Barbie.”) Hey, Tim, *there’s a cross-over for you!*

Maggie Nowakowska: Hey, if you ever dig up that article comparing SW with Oz, *please* make a copy for me? (Beg, grovel, whine...) I’d *love* to read it! ((Ed: *Check the clippings section of this issue, Pat. I may have what you’re looking for.*)) I have to say that Oz was my first fandom. When I was a small child in grade school, some of my friends and I used to play it on the playground. I was usually the Cowardly Lion. And in the second grade, we did a puppet play of the original story (which had lots more characters) and I was the Ball of Fire version of the wizard. I can’t remember being that obsessed with anything before that.

Judith Klinger: Kenobi is already known to have said on at least one occasion, “...from a certain point of view.” I think he was the one who felt that the ends justify the means. Therefore, I think that if in truth as Cheree suggested, that Ben knew that the only way to defeat the Emperor was for Vader to do it, with inspraition from Luke, then he would not see committing suicide in order to steer Luke in the right direction as being Dark-sided in the least. Perhaps hatred didn’t play a part in it at all. He’d simply seen one path to the destruction of the Emperor and this was the way to put Luke on that path.

I like your idea that Palpatine perhaps at first intended to use the Jedi to his own ends and that the bureaucrats and politicians were possibly so in fear of the Jedi that they felt total eradication was the only solution. Perhaps also they

felt that if Palpatine did win the Jedi over to his side, this would make him too powerful and they wanted to keep a semblance of control to themselves.

Cheree: You mentioned that your “illumination” came from *Star Trek*. Well, having been in the 7th grade when ST first aired, ST was also my first fannish interest (not counting Oz as mentioned above because I was so young at the time. We only played out the story and didn’t create our own Oz stories.) Anyway, a much younger friend of mine recently asked me what it was like being a ST fan back then during the time it was being aired for the first time. I told him — speaking for myself, of course — it was much different than now. You just didn’t let people know that you watched, much less enjoyed, the show. The kids in school would simply taunt you endlessly. They would embarrass and humiliate you the best they could. As I recall, most fans, at least those of school age, were pretty much closet fans. We didn’t have the vast fan groups to go to for moral support and intelligent discourse. That didn’t really start up until the mid-to-late 70’s. Luckily, I was in college by then and found a small group of like-thinkers.

((Ed: *I think I must be a year older than you, Pat. I was in the 8th grade when ST debuted and I was immediately taken with it. During the three years it was on, it was okay to watch and like it, but once it went off, I began to be ridiculed for still liking it. I remember how excited I was to find the first James Blish book in a local store, but it took me quite a while to work up the nerve to actually buy it, for fear that the salesclerk would make fun of me. I once made a friend of mine go into a toy store and buy a model kit of the Enterprise for me because I couldn’t bear any questioning by the sales staff. By 1972, I felt I was the last living ST fan in the world, and it was about then that fandom took off and I haven’t looked back since. Fans today can’t imagine how secretive and circumspect you had to be in those early days. I’m so glad things have changed.*))

Well, I guess that’s all for this time. There’s a lot more comments I’d like to respond to but this is quite long enough as it is. I do want to say just one more thing, though, to Cheree. I love all the articles and cartoons and stuff you put in SE. I wish we could do the same in our newsletter but we get it printed at Kinko’s and they are copyright infringement-paranoid (they’ve been burnt in the past), so they refuse to make copies of *anything* cut out of a newspaper or magazine. Meanwhile, I can enjoy reading these things in your pages!

