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The Jedi and the Empire Both Strike Back

The Empire Strikes Back and *Return of the Jedi* were box office champs, pulling in millions of dollars every week. ROTJ was the number one box office draw on opening weekend, while TESB and SW both remained in the top 10.

Here are reader comments on all three films:

Marti Schuller:

I saw SW on Feb. 1 at an 11 a.m. showing. How I wished I was in the company of fellow fans or in a city less reserved. Would you believe that I was the *only* person wearing even a SW shirt?! Audience enthusiasm was evident strictly by the number of overheard whispered comments among others, by a slight smattering of applause when the lights dimmed, and by a bit more applause at the conclusion of the film. I'd had reservations about seeing the new additions, I admit, but when I sat down in that theater and the music began, I felt my heart begin to pound with the same old thrill. My face literally hurt from smiling so much by the time the credits began to roll. It was such a joy to see the film on the big screen again, where it belongs. Plus, the fun of all the publicity and promo items just adds to the feeling of sharing once more what I've loved for so long. As for the added footage, I liked about 90% of it. I loved the new Mos Eisley especially, though I did feel that the intrusion on the scene where Luke and Obi-Wan first encounter the troopers was a bit much. I did not like Jabba, feeling he was far too non-menacing and small, but I even accepted that footage for the sake of seeing more of Han. The scenes (or should I say scene) with Biggs was not to my liking. As someone involved with SW fandom, I have a better understanding of who he was, but not many others in the audience seemed to make the connection. I also found it a little hard to accept that the meeting between he and

Luke would have been so casual. The only reference we get is that Biggs had gone off "to the academy" — whatever that is — yet Luke shows little surprise at finding his friend among the Rebels. I don't think so! Still, I could tolerate even that. What I could not, *will not*, accept is the addition in the cantina that has Greedo firing at Han first! NEVER!! This totally would change the man we know. What made Han so unique and interesting was that here was a man who could commit cold-blooded murder and still be a hero. So, I have adopted Barbara Anderson's opinion that this whole scene was a simple matter of computer glitch and didn't happen. It is the *only* tolerable approach. All in all, however, I did love the adventure and am eagerly looking forward to seeing TESB and ROTJ (in spite of the idiotic addition of a musical expansion number in Jabba's palace).

Matthew Whitney:

Early 1997 has certainly belonged to SW fandom. To tell the truth, I had harbored fears that the SpEds would not catch on with the general public and George would by this time have scrapped the prequel plans. But quite the reverse came true. The trilogy did not just do *well*, it was HUGE! ANH and ROTJ are still playing in my area. Does anyone feel vindicated? I do. After it seeming as if the Saga might have slipped into obscurity in the late 80s, it is wonderful to know that the films are as alive as ever, if not bigger.

Overall, I was very pleased with the SpEds, both the new scenes and the enhancements. Both ANH and TESB had scenes that didn't sit so well, but as I expected they are of the sort that only "us dinosaurs" are bothered by but will be read as canon by the new fans. The biggest thrill was simply seeing the films again in all their big screen glory. The sharpness of the colors knocked my socks off. Were they always this brilliant or is it due to higher quality prints

from the negatives? I cannot say I found the sound to be better. The sound was always one of my favorite aspects of the films (so rich & multi-layered), so I never needed it enhanced. Cheree, I think you hit the nail on the head. At times the added sound FX were more of an intrusion than enhancement. Amanda Palumbo mentioned Leia's blaster (in ANH, before the chasm swing) now has a loud, harsh, BANG noise, which was totally unneeded. And sometimes the sound was just plain too loud.

But returning to the positives ... most of the new scenes in all three were terrific. Favorites include: most of Mos Eisley, the sand crawler, the *Falcon* leaving docking bay 94, the new approach to Yavin, and the new angles of the final battle. From TESB: the wampa, the cleaned up shots such as Hoth no longer being visible through the bridge details of one of the Star Destroyers, and the much more open Cloud City. Bespin was a significant justification for the SpEds. When we go back and view our old tapes, the city is going to look almost claustrophobic. The SpEd version is a vast improvement (without taking a thing away from the original). A friend insists the improved continuity of how Vader leaves Cloud City is the best extra stuff in TESB. Certainly a nice surprise (anyone notice Jerjerrod greeting him on the *Executor*?).

ROTJ seemed to have the fewest additions. The Sarlacc pit, herd of banthas, and sail barge were the best of the FX. The ending crowd reaction scenes worked better than I expected (though I do not like the new end theme music). Could the reason ROTJ received the fewest/most minor additions be due to the size of the production of the original filming? ANH was first out of the blocks, the technology being invented along the way, with compromises left and right. With TESB I think George felt he let himself stand too far away from daily control, so when it came time for ROTJ, he practically stood at Marquand's elbow throughout. So, ROTJ may have been closest to his final vision. Or, in planning the SpEds they figured ROTJ could ride the others' coat tails and the decision to keep the "sprucing up" to a minimum was a budgetary call?

Only a couple of times did I feel the FX intruded on the story, mostly in ANH. I could have done without the big creature blocking the speeder when Luke, OWK, and the droids were questioned. There were also a couple of comic effect elements I felt cluttered the Mos Eisley sequence.

Anyway, the effort put into revamping was well worth it. I stand by my original assertion that these films are not necessarily better than the originals, but the attention the new scenes brought (IMO) sold them to the mass audiences (and the revenues will guarantee the prequels being made). A couple of people complained to me that there was only a couple of minutes of new footage and that wasn't worth the ticket price. My response was that I would've paid to see

them without new stuff, that the new stuff was for the newcomers and from a marketing p.o.v. was brilliant.

There are several new scenes I consider to be key, deserving a closer look. First is Greedo firing before Han. It wasn't as bad as anticipated — it was WORSE! From two feet he missed?!? A pal told me they established in the bounty hunter anthology that Greedo's race has poor night vision so ... *but* that just paints him an idiot for cornering Solo in a dimly lit barroom. Wrong call, George. No ifs, ands, or buts, and all my comments from an issue or two ago still hold. A kinder, gentler Han is a misunderstanding of what makes the character special.

In the tiniest defense of Lucas for this scene, I recall hearing that during the original filming he had been out a week or so due to illness and when he returned he flipped a gasket over how poorly his assistant directors had shot the barroom scenes. The quick fix at the time had been to add random shots of creature heads to make it look exotic. Maybe George had all along meant for Greedo to fire first, and it was changed without his knowledge (but once in the can, he couldn't simply rebuild the sets, etc). Unfortunately, once the film was released, I think it was too late to attempt another fix. As the altered scene stands, the dialog is obviously clipped, the staging unbelievable (he *missed*!!!), and it just does not work!

Next, the Jabba scene: my quibbles with this scene are that the dialog is too similar to the Greedo scene, the performance by Ford seems flat, and I don't buy this Jabba as the same character from ROTJ. Elaborating on each, the first point could be explained by the Greedo scene being written to contain the information Lucas originally lost when he couldn't swing the Jabba FX and cut this scene. For the second, Ford's delivery feels as if he were doing it more as a run-through rather than a real take, as if he knew this was going on the cutting room floor. And for the last, this Jabba is far too comical to jive with the character in ROTJ. I hated Han getting away with stepping on his tail. Too much explaining is needed to get this character in step with the third film's evil gangster.

Leaving ANH with a point in its favor, the Biggs scene was my favorite of the entire reworked trilogy. It was totally unexpected and cleans up a long-time continuity gap (of allowing a farm boy to fly a high-tech fighter).

In TESB I had two quibbles: Luke's added scream during his fall into the central core of Bespin and the new dialog line on Dagobah. What was wrong with "You're lucky you don't taste so good?" A pal offered that maybe some viewers didn't realize a swamp creature was trying to eat R2. As for Luke's scream, that seemed definitely out of character for his mental resolve at that moment.

Turning to ROTJ, I wonder why they were unable/unwilling to clean up the shot of Darth stepping off his shuttle at the start of the film. Something went wrong

with the original footage/negative and it is horribly scored with vertical lines (we call it Vader's "rain of terror"). We thought for sure that would be cleaned up. The herd of banthas was probably my favorite extra shot in this film. The new palace band was no better than Max Rebo (I was very pleased with ROTJ from the outset, though, from the slimiest creature to the cutest Ewok). My reaction here was more relief with what was not changed. I was ready to go ballistic if Boba crawled out of the Sarlacc pit. Thankfully, he remained dead.

It almost sounds as if I didn't like the SpEds. Not true, I'm just greasing the squeaky wheels. It was a thrill meeting new bands of friends for opening nights, going to a Sunday matinee and waiting in line an hour before an 11:45AM show, a family outing where my brother and his wife brought Alison (my five year old niece) — starting another generation of fans on her journey. I also got a kick out of letting my colleagues and students know that I am actually a bigger SW fan than I am a Trekkie (even the principal calls me "Spockie"). With SW having a low profile since I began my teaching career, my status as the resident SF fan was assumed to be limited to Trek. It took a month for one guy to get over the fact I'd seen each film between 60-90 times.

A last word on the SpEds, as much as I want to see the Biggs/Anchorhead scenes, I can understand why they were not added. Ask anyone who doesn't like ANH and I bet they'll grouse that the first half of the film is "boring." Obviously I disagree, but I believe their point is that they expect space battles and are confused why we spend so much time on the ground. Our much wanted Biggs scenes would only compound that. Our only hope is probably a behind-the-scenes feature, like *From SW to Jedi: The Making of a Saga* where we saw the Jabba scenes.

A. G. Steyn:

The Force is with you, people — but the money is with Lucas.

OK, so by now we have all seen the "improved" version of our beloved saga. A mixed blessing. I like the freshened up colors, and most of the added stuff was quite enjoyable (tho' every once in a while there was an unnecessary bit that was as sorely needed as wheels on a star destroyer).

And some stuff remained in, altho' I would have thought that the "geniuses" at Lucasfilm would have caught these things and gotten rid of 'em:

(a) Obi-Wan's lightsaber blade still casts a *shadow* on the old Jedi's tunic!

(b) Lando Calrissian is still brushing up on his ebonics ("Wait! I thought you was blind!") and Han is trying to beat him at it ("Me and Chewie...").

(c) 3PO is still complaining to R2, as they march towards Jabba's palace: "Poor Lando and *Chewbacca* never returned from this awful place". Huh? What was that again? *AND CHEWBACCA???* C'mon, goldenrod. Chewie came with Booush-Leia after you and the dustbin on wheels had become part of the Hutt's entourage. So there's no way the Wook could have vanished together with Lando.

ANH:

1. I *hate* the new Jabba. Yuck! How awful. Where has the "gorgeous, irresistible blob of lard" gone that we know and cherish from ROTJ?

2. Political correctness is for those who don't have any *real* problems. Is SW going ST now? Greedo *has* to shoot first to justify glory-wearing superhero-of-the-Rebellion Solo's gunslinging. No way, Jose! Han was a streetwise, toughened-by-life pirate/blockade runner/smuggler/ex-serviceman who'd "been there" and knew Greedo all too well to allow this gutter rat to shoot first. What's next? Capt. Antilles smacking Vader's cowcatcher with a glove to justify Darthie strangling him? **FORCE BE WITH US!!**

3. I *liked* the new looks of Mos Eisley, tho' it sometimes resembled a zoo, with all those Rontos, Banthas, Dewbacks and Womprats (or what were those kangaroo rat-type critters hopping around outside the city limits?). Besides: overheard a guy at the movies remarking "Those beasts (Dewbacks) are so slow and cumbersome, those stormtroopers would be faster if they *walked* instead of riding the lizards." The man had a point there.

4. I *loved* darling Han stepping on Jabba's tail (and darling Boba standing by and doing nothing — as usual). Jabba must have a weak spot in his heart for those two loveable rogues... Can't see him tolerate that kind of behavior from anyone else in his entourage.

Oh, yeah — before I forget: Did anyone else notice (see also some more recent issues of *The StarWars Insider* for reference), that Boba Fett's uniform underwent slight changes yet again? In TESB his cape was brown, and he wore brown/tan gloves. The grenade in his grenade launcher was black and shiny. In ROTJ his cape was green and the grenade was painted in dull tones (gray, off-white etc.) and really scraped up. In the rerelease of ANH (and some photos in the *SW Insider*) he's wearing different gloves and a brown cape again. Sigh!!! Also I notice that the red emblem on his left shoulder patch seems missing in ANH (resp. in the movie still that was in the *SW Insider*). But maybe I need new glasses ... I'm nearsighted anyway.

Aaaand... while on the subject: Has anyone (besides yours truly) ever wondered why anyone in his right mind working in such a risky trade as "Mr. Cool", runs around with a grenade on his back that might, when hit by a laser beam or otherwise exposed to high heat/a big impact,

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short. They were so sure he hadn't learned anything. But in ROTJ, we see that he absorbed and internalized all of his lessons and put them to good use. Maybe he needed that trial by fire in TESB, awful as it was.

"I don't trust Lando!"

"Well, I don't trust him either, but he is my friend."

Perhaps, with the exception of Chewie, this was the only kind of "friend" Han had been used to.

Why did Ben choose a time when Luke was rather out

found it pointless. Boba Fett was as dull as usual. At least he's consistent, unlike Jabba.

The new *Falcon* takeoff was great. The extra stormtroopers gag was funny. At one point Leia's laser rifle made the sound of a shotgun for several shots, rather strange. The TIE fighters also seemed to have a new sound effect which I didn't like. I liked most of the new CGI shots in the Death Star battle. The Death Star and Alderaan explosions were slightly improved but if they were going to

all that trouble, they should've made them much bigger and what's with that silly shock wave effect? I thought I'd love the Biggs scene but I didn't. It looks like a first take. It's badly acted and doesn't really fit without the earlier scenes.

Mostly I found the whole thing rather distracting because I just kept noticing all the changes. I couldn't understand why they'd change certain shots and not others. For instance, some of the Star Destroyer shots looked so grainy I thought they'd fall apart. Those would've been easy to re-do. On the whole, I felt there were too many changes. They should've concentrated on just cleaning up the matte lines and re-shooting a few effects. I was greatly disappointed that Chewie didn't get a medal.

TESB: I was glad they hadn't reshot the taun-tauns. The speeders look better, the motion is a lot smoother now. The extra Cloud City shots are wonderful, brilliantly integrated. Cloud City was always my favorite locale and now even more so. The extra shots simply enhance rather than distract. I was in heaven. But then a few minutes from the end, George has to blow it. When Luke falls from the gantry, he now lets out the most banal "Aaaaaahhhhhh!!!" completely ruining the grace of the moment. I sometimes wonder if George's genius is tainted by galactic sized flashes of dumbness that threaten to eclipse all his good work.

On the whole, TESB is certainly visually enhanced by the changes.

ROTJ: Well, the new dance sequence is dull but no worse than the original. I just wish Lucas had exploited the opportunity to excise Max Rebo and Droopy, but, no. They're still there flopping about.

The optical work in the Rancor scene has been improved but still has flaws. Why was Boba Fett shown flirting with those dancers? I mean, it kinda ruins his cool image and that cool image is about the only thing he's got going for himself.

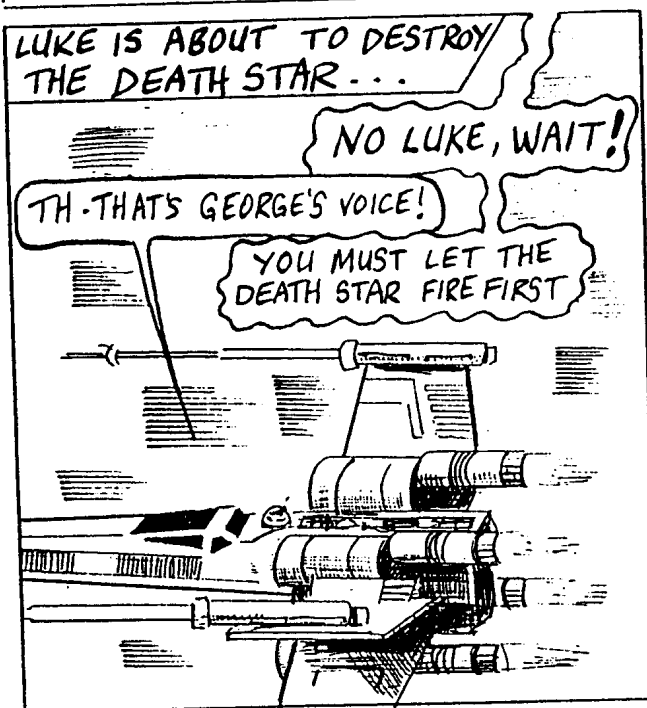
The Bantha herd was great and the sail barge and skiffs look a lot better. The added "beak" of the Sarlacc seemed pointless and doesn't it spoil the mystery?

The new scenes of Cloud City, Mos Eisley and Coruscant were fantastic but felt out of place.

However, my favorite change was the last scene. Gone is that awful "Nyub Nyub — Celebrate the Love" (or whatever the hell it's called) which has been replaced by a beautiful and dignified piece of music. It actually left me with a good taste in my mouth.

ROTJ is the only one that doesn't have changes I hate but it's still the weakest film of the three. Watching it on the big screen without the luxury of being able to fast forward to my favorite scenes, it confirmed what I've always felt — that the main characters are ignored in favor of sub-muppets.

ONE DAY AT THE 40th ANNIVERSARY OF STAR WARS



HOW TO READ AN ADZINE OR THE OLD AND THE USELESS

Susan M. Garrett

Adzines are one of the best ways to track down zines that you'd like to purchase or submit to, but even those innocent, or not so innocent, listings have their pitfalls. If an adzine listing is old, it is virtually worthless.

What is an adzine?

An adzine lists zines that are in print or proposed, and may also print reviews of fanzines, personal statements, convention listings, notices from people searching for special items, or people who have fannish items other than zines to sell. The benefit of using an adzine is that it contains a large and varied number of listings, including international zines, giving you a better idea of things that are out there and things yet to come than you could ever get from a handful of flyers on a convention table.

How do I find an adzine?

There are usually no more than two or three large adzines in existence at any given time. Adzines are usually available for subscription or single issue prices through mail order, although they are often also available at some of the larger conventions. The frequency of issues may range from monthly, to bi-monthly, to quarterly, to whenever they get it out.

Could I put in a listing?

Certainly, but contact the adzine first and order a sample copy. Most adzines allow zine listings at no charge, but permit personal statements and/or sale listings for items other than zines only from subscribers. In addition, adzines may have a certain form or format that you must follow. As usual, inquire with an SASE.

Adzines usually provide a place for non-zine merchandise or information, such as a listing of fan clubs and conventions, or media related items for sale, including fanzine collections, photos, stationery, mugs, etc. "Wanted"

advertisements are also growing popular — fans in search of articles or videos on their favorite actors, old fanzines, or penpals.

What does a listing tell me?

An adzine listing will tell you a good number of things. First, check to see what section of the zine you're in; most adzines have a section listing zines that are in print, proposed but not yet in print, or a section just for letterzines or adult and slash zines.

The listing itself may be preceded or followed by a code identifying the media or series the zine contains. ST, for example, usually means *Star Trek*, while STNG usually means *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. The codes may change from adzine to adzine, but are usually listed on the first or contents page of the adzine for easy reference. Some codes are virtually universal — "M" standing for media or multi-media, which may mean there are many different shows involved, that the series the zine is about is a relatively small fandom, or that the zine is about a series that is non-science fiction in nature.

Slash is listed as "/", usually with some indication of the series involved. K/S refers to Kirk and Spock, while S/H refers to Starsky and Hutch. Sometimes slash zines are listed only with the "/" symbol and with no series identification. In addition, a slash symbol or a zine listed as *adult* often requires that you send a statement saying that you are over eighteen years of age and can legally purchase the material — this is called an age statement.

The listing will also include the title of the zine, a brief description of the zine, and a name and address of the press or publisher. Make careful note of how the check is to be made out, as many editors who publish under a press name cannot cash checks made out to the zine title or press name. For example, Mary Lou Breen, editor of "What's Up Doc," publishes all of her zines under the name of Buggs Press, but a check would be made out to the attention of Mary Lou Breen, unless the listing states otherwise. Many adzines

will state on their first or informational page how they list check payees in their publication.

If you have any questions about how a check should be made out or if you are interested in ordering, send an inquiry letter first, with an SASE for the editor's answer. Editors send listings to adzines months or sometimes years in advance of publication. The price listing may no longer be accurate because of a change in the zine or postal increase, or the zine may be out of print and no longer available, or even may not have been printed. Always SASE before sending an order and you will avoid a lot of disappointments.

Do I have to add postage?

Most adzines list a price that includes postage and will inform you as to how the zine may be sent. Smaller zines, for example, usually go through 1st class U.S. Mail, while larger zines may be sent book rate, book rate/special handling, or by UPS. The editor will sometimes list a variety of prices, including those for outside the U.S. If you have any questions, write an inquiry to the editor and, as usual, enclose an SASE.

When ordering a foreign zine, it is always a good idea to contact the editor first and confirm price, the amount of time the zine will take to reach you, and whether or not you wish to be posted by international air or sea mail. With your inquiry, enclose a self-addressed envelope and two IRCs (International Reply Coupons) which may be purchased at your local post office. An IRC may be used by the foreign editor to reply to your questions, as U.S. stamps can only be used to send mail out of the U.S. and within the U.S.

Should I write to a zine listed as proposed?

By all means, write to any zine that piques your interest. Proposed zines are good places to find editors looking for contributions. Follow the guidelines for a submission inquiry and let the editor know that you'd like to contribute. If an editor has no submissions, they have nothing to put in the zine, and the zine will fold.

Remember that a proposed zine is probably not yet in print and may be no more than a gleam in the editor's eye, so do not send any money without inquiring further.

If you'd like to know when the zine is ready, by all means send an SASE to the editor and ask for information. SASEs are as invaluable as contributions to a fledgling zine. If an editor has something to print, but doesn't think the readers are there, the zine will fold and the submissions will be returned. An SASE from you tells the editor that the reading public is interested in seeing that zine and gives the editor more incentive to take on the enormous work

involved with putting out a zine.

How do I know what zines are really in print?

That depends on the frequency and accuracy of the adzine. Some adzines come out on a regular schedule and constantly update their material, providing you with accurate, current information. Other adzines come out once in a blue moon and do not weed out listings that say "due June 1985" in an adzine published in June 1987! Read the listings carefully and, as always, inquire before sending money.

What is a personal statement?

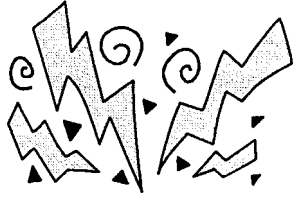
Often, adzines will print personal statements from editors, contributors, or readers. Personal statements notify fandom at large of something they may need to know — a change of address, an important delay in zine production, a change in production ... or any information that won't be better served by the placement of a normal zine listing. In extreme cases, the statement may be the final recourse for a consumer or contributor problem — an unauthorized use of a story, artwork or name; a warning about bootleggers, etc.

Remember that a personal statement is not an appropriate forum for personal grudges, name-calling, or fannish feuds, nor is it a place for self-promotion or advertisement. If you're uncertain, ask the editors of the adzine — or be prudent and don't submit the personal statement.

Conclusion

If fandom has a mail order marketplace, it's in the form of adzines. An adzine is only as good as its listings; a current, accurate adzine is worth its weight in gold. Before you order, read the listing carefully and always inquire before sending any money. Use SASEs to support proposed zines and let editors know what you would like to see in print.

LOST: Last seen at MediaWest*Con in the Imperial Room (F.O.E. cantina) on Friday night at the dance: A Minolta zoom camera with one roll of film in camera. Camera was in a black belt pouch. Camera is brand new and not paid for yet. Return would be greatly appreciated — no questions asked. Contact Pat Grant, 2343 N. Cedar St., Apt. A, Holt, MI 48842-2154, (517) 694-0961. I'll pay for shipping!



NEWS FLASHES

Passed along by SVE ZAHN
from the Internet



◆ Hooray! George Lucas has completed writing the story and screenplay for the first prequel movie, now tentatively called “The Beginning” (that will no doubt change several times). Ewan McGregor, a British actor, has been cast as the young(er) Obi-Wan, and the teenage Anakin and “young Queen” (as yet unnamed mother of Luke and Leia) have been cast for some time. Warwick Davis has been promised a role in the prequels, and James Earl Jones will be returning as the voice of Darth Vader after he becomes mechanized at the end of the third movie.

◆ Carrie Fisher is meeting with George Lucas to “punch up” the dialog for Luke and Leia’s mother, who will be a 14-year-old girl in the first prequel and a 24-year-old in the second prequel. Lucas has always maintained he can’t write for women.

◆ George Lucas has forced the cast and crew of his new *Star Wars* movie to sign non-disclosure statements. Lucasfilm has had a complete gag order in effect anyway since work began on the Prequels, but since filming is due to begin soon, he no doubt wants to reinforce the code of silence.

◆ Sit down and hold on to your seats for this one, folks. I had to read this twice, today, I was so stunned. It seems Anakin is not the only one whose mysterious past will be unravelled in the prequels. Again, this information comes from the very, very reliable Harry Knowles, whose source within Lucasfilm (referred to only as Deepthroat) has been extremely accurate thus far with prequel information. This is not a rumor. *If you don’t want to know, don’t read any further!*

Meet Boba Fett ... nice guy ... until... The following is quoted exactly as I received it:

“Everyone’s favorite bounty hunter, Boba Fett, was originally not supposed to be in the upcoming prequels at all, that is until us geeks and our freakish devotion to that armored thug carried the character to Lucas’ mind with new possibilities. So because of us, Lucas created a very interesting prequel character involving the Sarlacc chew-toy [Fett].”

“We will be introduced to a loveable character in the first film, which will conjure up memories of good ol’ Solo, however, like Solo in *Empire*, this character will meet with seemingly tragic ends. Fett’s fall is shrouded in mystery (read: secrecy) but [Deepthroat illuminates it with] “his fall causes a hate for Jedi”. Then halfway through Episode 2, the character will return as Boba Fett, minus the helmet, so that we know who this character is/was, then finally he dons the helmet.”

“Now we know from Deepthroat that [the *Millenium Falcon* appears in the prequels and] the *Falcon* is only ever flown by good guys, but that [her pilot in the prequels] was not to be Obi-Wan or Anakin. Well, it turns out that in Episode 1 it will be none other than the nice guy Fett who has the *Falcon*. What happens to the *Falcon* in Episodes 2 and 3 is untold. We can only speculate that the ship falls into another character’s hands after Fett’s fall. It is clear that this character will not be known as Boba Fett until Episode 2. It has also been stated that Fett will figure BIG into Episodes 1 and 3.” — Harry Knowles

There you have it! Is this incredible, or what? I’m waiting to find out that 3PO and R2 belonged to Anakin, next. After all, all three trilogies are supposed to be told by the droids, so they had to have been there! Or maybe 3PO (being a protocol droid) belonged to the Queen, and R2 (being an astronavigation droid) belonged to Anakin (who was a pilot). Maybe this is how 3PO and R2 originally met! Mind you, this is all *my* speculation and imagination and not based on anything I’ve heard!

◆ NEW YORK (Variety) - After several meetings with George Lucas, Liam Neeson has emerged as the top choice for the starring role in the first new *Star Wars* prequel, sources said.

He’ll play a new character, the master Jedi knight. A deal for Neeson, who is said to have tested with several unknowns who hope to play other lead roles, could be sealed shortly.

Lucas, who wrote the script for the first of the next three *Star Wars* films and plans to direct it this fall at

Leavesden Studios in London, has been meeting with numerous actors for various roles. That includes *Trainspotting* star Ewan McGregor, who has met with Lucas for the role of the young Obi-Wan Kenobi, who was played as an aging Jedi master in the original *Star Wars* film by Alec Guinness.

Sources said Neeson and Lucas have met for a character who was not in the original trio of films, but is the main character in the first new one.

Though Lucas' script has been a tightly guarded secret, sources said Neeson would play a role much like the one Guinness played in *Star Wars*, a mentor for the young knights.

A spokeswoman for Lucas denied any final decisions had been made by the director: "Absolutely no one has been cast in this film," she said. She acknowledged Lucas has been meeting many actors, but wouldn't specifically comment on Neeson.

The Irish star is currently playing Jean Valjean in Mandalay's *Les Miserables*, but landing the pivotal role in Lucas' next film could be his biggest achievement since playing Oskar Schindler.

◆ *Entertainment Tonight* recently reported on four confirmed signings for the first prequel. Liam Neeson (*Schindler's List*) will play a "Jedi master", Ewan McGregor (*Trainspotting*) will portray young Obi-Wan Kenobi, Natalie Portman will play Luke and Leia's mother, and the boy from *Jingle All the Way* (anyone know his name?) will be young Anakin Skywalker.



You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll kiss \$14.95 goodbye!

Hey, guys, everyone remember that hysterical little SW spoof, *Hardware Wars*? Well, it's back ... as *Hardware Wars: the Special Edition*. Just gone mine today and it's a hoot! From the back of the full-color box:

"The critics were raving about the hilarious parody of *Star Wars* which was awarded 'The Most Popular Short Film of the Year' at the Chicago Film Festival. The year was 1977 and this little spoof became the highest grossing short film of all time!

"Today, the Farce is back — and just like its big screen cousin *Star Wars*, it too has been 'redigitized, remastered and re-released' — with over 20 new 'special defects' and scenes by Los Angeles' leading computer graphics artists.

"This 'space saga of romance, rebellion, and household appliances' features steam-iron spaceships, flying toasters, *Star Wars*-lookalikes Fluke Starbucker, Ham Salad, Auggie 'Ben' Doggie, Princess Anne-Droid, 4-Q-2, Artie-Deco, and Darph Nader.

"You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll kiss three bucks goodbye. Get in line now! May the Farce be with you!"

The front cover features a HW:SE gold logo, and SW-like "art" poster of Fluke, Ham, Anne-Droid, Auggie Ben Doggie, the basketball (Death Star), the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz* as 4-Q-2, the vacuum cleaner that plays Artie Deco, and Cookie Monster as Chewie. Around them, shooting through space, are steam irons, a waffle iron, some burnt toast (the toaster's equivalent of blaster fire), and a tape recorder.

This little 20 minute film (anyone know how long the original was?) is \$9.95 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. If you want one of your own, send a check or money order to:

Michael Weise Productions
11288 Ventura Blvd., Suite 821
Studio City, CA 91604

or call 1-800-833-5738.

Mine came very quickly. The video was shipped to me UPS. — Barbara Gardner



Star Wars and Tolkien

Doris Robin

George Lucas read Tolkien before he wrote the SW saga (according to his biography, *Skywalking* by Dale Pollack). He deliberately read a large number of science fiction and fantasy books, including the *Foundation* Trilogy by Isaac Asimov and *The Lord of the Rings*. He also read Bettelheim and Joseph Campbell, among others. He was consciously setting out to create a myth, a mythopoeic creation. LOTR and SW have similar sources in fairy tales and mythologies of all sorts. They have universal themes. There is the hidden hero — the hero who is hidden away at birth or early childhood, and no one knows about him. He often doesn't know his own identity. Frodo is hidden away, living quietly in the Shire, and does not know he is to be a hero. Luke is hidden away on Tatooine and does not even know his paternity.

There is the theme of the Quest. Bilbo goes on the quest to find the Ring (although he does not realize this), and Frodo goes on the quest to destroy the Ring. Luke fulfills his quest. "Fulfills" is a good word here because another theme that is constant in both works is destiny — the idea that there is some kind of outside power setting up things. It's not really predetermination per se, but someone or something presents the characters with significant options they must choose between. When Bilbo does not kill Gollum, it sets up a certain pattern for the rest of the story. Luke also has options which will change outcomes. If he had not chosen to go to Dagobah, or not to go from Dagobah to Bespin, things would have been very different in ROTJ.

In both works, there is conversion of characters, from good to evil and from evil to good. In LOTR, Boromir's character gradually changes as he succumbs to temptation. Frodo changes to something beyond himself and turns to evil at the last minute. In SW the obvious conversion is between Vader and Anakin. There is also a conversion of Han Solo throughout the three movies: he gradually becomes more and more committed to a cause and to people and ceases being a cynical loner.

There are also similar structures and similar characters.

Luke and Frodo both succumb to evil and both have to be helped away from it. In Frodo's case, Gollum helps him away from evil by becoming the surrogate who gets cast into the fire. Luke gives in to anger, fear and aggression and starts to fall, when he suddenly hears the Emperor laugh as he is standing over his father. The mocking laughter pulls Luke up short. Evil defeats itself in both cases. The hero lucks out! — which goes back to the destiny theme.

Both Sauron and the Emperor are blind in many ways. They both consider domination and power the most important things in the universe. They're both overconfident and that causes their downfalls. Sauron had used the power of the Ring to corrupt all the people around him. When the Ring turns up in the Fellowship's hands, Sauron waits quietly, expecting them to fight over it until a rival rises up whom he can crush. He is overconfident that this will happen and overlooks the threat of the little hobbits, creeping small but indomitable into the very heart of his stronghold. The Emperor is equally unaware of his own small creeping threat, the Ewoks. He calls the moon of Endor the sanctuary moon. Meg Garrett claims that this is because he uses it as a hunting sanctuary! That's just a joke, but the point is that the Emperor doesn't consider the Ewoks significant. They are nothing to him and he cannot imagine them helping to turn the tide.

The Emperor vastly underestimates Luke as well. He believes he can corrupt the hero, just as Sauron expects the Ring to corrupt anyone who wears it. The Emperor expects to be able to bring the hero under his power and dominion through that corruption, and he is very surprised when he isn't able to. Neither villain can imagine anyone resisting the lure of power. To them, power is the essence of everything.

When Frodo puts on the Ring at the Cracks of Doom, and Sauron focuses his attention on him, all the people driven by Sauron's power are left bereft. "From all his policies and webs of fear and treachery, from all his stratagems and wars his mind shook free; and throughout his realm a tremor ran, his slaves quailed, and his armies

Reprinted from *Mythcon* with permission. At Mythcon XIV, held at Scripps College in 1983, one of the featured program items was a panel titled "Return of the Myths: Tracing the Mythic Structures in the *Star Wars* Saga," led and moderated by Lisa Cowan. This is the third in a 5-part series based on that panel.

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The same thing happens with the Emperor. His dark will is distracted away from Vader after he thinks that Vader is no longer important. Vader is lying there, disarmed, out of the picture, and the Emperor is busy concentrating on Luke. Vader is now suddenly free of the control and the will that have been pushing at him and watching over him all this time. At his son's urging ("Father, help me!"), he is able to revitalize the Anakin within him. Anakin can now come out and take over and defeat the Emperor.

Saruman and Vader can be paired together in certain aspects. First of all, they are both corrupted by the masters of evil and both of them then betray their masters. Treebeard says of Saruman, "He is plotting to become a Power. He has a mind of metal and wheels." Obi-Wan describes Vader similarly: "He's more machine now than man: twisted and evil."

Vader as warlord can be related to the Nazgul. Both of them are sustained by the power of their masters and they cannot really exist without it. The Nazgul were corrupted by their desire for power and have become empty shells, eaten away inside. In a way that happened to Darth Vader. He has become a figure as terrifying to his own troops as to anyone else, the same as the Nazgul. The Nazgul leader is

not a great help in battle. When he lands at the Pelennor Fields, the elephants go wild and everyone tries to get away from him. He causes more havoc in his own troops than he does against the enemy. The same thing happens with Vader. He leaves his own troops in a state of nervous frenzy all the time.

Vader and the Nazgul are also similarly overconfident. When the chief Nazgul is confronting Gandalf, he says, "Old fool! This is my hour. Do you not know Death when you see it?" When Vader faces Obi-Wan, he says, "Obi-Wan, when I left you, I was but the learner. Now I am the master." And later he says, "Your powers are weak, old man."

Stretching character connections even further, you can compare Eowyn and Leia. Both are shield-maidens. Both are geared for war and involved in war, which is traditionally not a female role. They are both wounded in war, both in the arm. Going further, Eowyn marries the second in command, Faramir. She does not win the major hero, Aragorn. Leia does not end up with the major hero, Luke, but with the secondary hero, Han. Leia does not have the stress within her family that Eowyn does, but she does have the stress of loss of family. In a way, Eowyn has felt that she has lost her family, too. She sees Theoden as lost to her, and her whole existence as closed in and crushed around her.

To finish up, I'd like to compare the basic structures of the two sagas. They both alternate between scenes of large action and scenes of individual people. Benjamin Urrutia has mentioned the final battle in both LOTR and SW as merely a side-line, a distraction from the truly important thing, which in both cases is the confrontation of individuals in the very heart of darkness. That is the same pattern in both sagas and the basis of each story.

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Deadline for #49 -- December 1, 1997. *Submissions received later than seven (7) days after deadline will not be published in the current issue.*

YOU MIGHT BE A REDNECK JEDI IF...

(THANKS TO SUE ZAHN FOR PASSING THIS ALONG)

...your Jedi robe is camouflage material.

...you have ever used your lightsaber to open a bottle of Boone's Farm Strawberry Hill.

...you think the best use of your lightsaber is picking your teeth.

...at least one wing of your X-wing is primer-colored.

...there is a blaster rack in the back of your landspeeder.

...you have bantha horns on the front of your landspeeder.

...you can easily describe the taste of mynock.

...you have a homemade Ewok fur coat.

...you can find no grammatical errors in the way Yoda talks.

...you think that Stormtroopers are just KKK members with really good sheets.

...you've ever defended your abode by answering, "Mudhole? Slimy? My home this is!"

...a peaceful meditation session is one without gas.

...you can levitate yourself using a force from within, but not *The Force*.

...your master ever said, "My finger you will pull ... hmmm?"

...you have ever had an X-wing up on blocks in your yard.

...you ever lost a hand during a lightsaber fight because you had to spit.

...the worst part of spending time on Dagobah is the dadgum skeeters.

...you have ever used the Force to get yourself another beer so that you didn't have to wait for a commercial.

...Wookiees are offended by your B.O.

...you have ever used the Force in conjunction with fishing or bowling.

...you have ever used a lightsaber to clean fish or open a non-twist-off bottle of beer.

...your father has ever said to you, "Shoot, son, come on over t' the dark side ... it'll be a hoot."

...you have ever had your R-2 unit use its self-defense electro-shock thingie to get the barbecue grill to light.

...your porch collapses and kills more than three Jawas.

...your Aunt Beru ever says, "Come move this T-16 transmission so I can take a bath!"

...you get dressed up to go into Tosche Station for some power converters.

...there is a stuffed womprat displayed anywhere in your home.

...you have a beer can crusher mounted on the dashboard of your x-wing.

...Sandpeople won't get in the car with you.

...the gas pedal on your landspeeder is shaped like a bare foot.

...you've ever shot womprats from your front porch.

...you've ever been kicked off Dagobah because you smelled too bad.

...your Uncle Owen encourages you to quit school because Fixer has an opening on the lube rack.

...you've ever had a nickname like "Wormie".

...you've ever considered dating your sister.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Judith Yuenger whose seventh grandchild arrived on March 25, 1997, 11:30 AM. — an 8 1/2 lb baby boy named Nathan Andrew. Baby, parents and grandparents are doing fine!!!

Susan Matthews on the publication of her first book, *An Exchange of Hostages*. Watch for the second volume in this series, *Prisoner of Conscience*, due out in February from Avon Books.

CONDOLENCES TO...

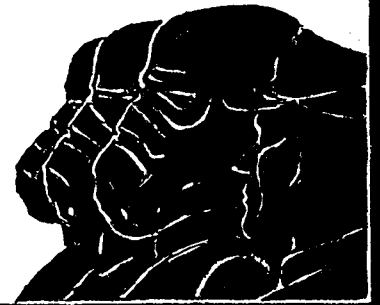
Laura Virgil on the death of her father to cancer in June.

GET WELL SOON TO...

Amanda Palumbo following surgery in July.



REVIEWING THE FLEET



J. L. Q. W. '86

THE PARADISE SNARE by A.C. Crispin
Reviewed by Z. P. Florian

Humbly and chastised I stand before my fellow fans. I have never believed that a pro writer would ever produce a book that wouldn't pale beside fan fiction. This one measures up to our very high and sometimes crooked standards. Crispin's book is about Han Solo as a child and as a young man. The book manages to create a background that yields the Han Solo we know and love. It is not the usual wimpy fare, it's gritty, hard and very realistic. Crispin's Han is the street urchin who grew up with criminals and learned almost nothing about the sunnier side of life. This is the Han who, without the influence of Leia and Luke, would have been just one of the hardened pirates in Mos Eisley, a Han striving for a barely remembered decency and never getting a chance to achieve it. There's young love going nowhere, luck that changes with the wind, lots of cruelty and very little gentleness in his life, yet there's fierce determination to survive and make something of himself, there's a search for his origins, there's the inventive streak born of desperation. Crispin explains every aspect of Han with events in his young life; there's nothing superfluous in the book. The episodes are sometimes very poignant. I warmly recommend the book — and its sequels that will come — to anyone who firmly believes that pro books are not to be touched. Crispin achieves what none of the pro writers ever did before — to write a story that is not designed to delight the children or please the publishers. Harrison Ford (who had his own idea about Han, and supposedly said that without Luke and Leia, Han would have gone over the line to sink into the criminal underworld, hopelessly lost) would be pleased with this Han. Crispin's Han could grow into the man we know from the very best fan stories, and indeed, the Han we saw in the movies. I can hardly wait for the second book and the third,

and I seriously expect the characters Crispin invented to appear in fan fiction. Her world is one we can adopt with as much joy as we embraced the Trilogy itself.



Amanda Palumbo and her little
"Skywalkers"

The 1996 STAR aWARDs

1996 STAR WARS ZINE

A Tremor in the Force #9 - Ed: Cheree Cargill

Honorable Mention: *I Don't Care What You Smell* #2 - Eds: Judy Yuenger & Marti Schuller

Honorable Mention: *Bright Center of the Universe* #6 - Ed: Ming Wathne

Honorable Mention: *Snowfire* #2 - Eds: Mary Jo Fox & Yvette Ghilan

1996 MULTI MEDIA ZINE CONTAINING STAR WARS

Flip of a Coin #17 - Eds: Paula Truelove & Jenny McAdams

Honorable Mention: *Texas Revelations* #3 - Ed: Candace Pulleine

1996 STAR WARS FOREIGN ZINE

I Have a Bad Feeling about this Too - Ed: Louise Turner

Honorable Mention: *Sarlacc* #1 - Eds: Lundin & Rydholm

Honorable Mention: *Elusive Lover* - Ed: Cara Loup

1996 NEWSLETTER/LETTERZINE

Southern Enclave - Ed: Cheree Cargill

Honorable Mention: *Bound By The Force* - Ed: Pat Grant

Honorable Mention: *International Brotherhood of Jedi Knights* - Ed: Lily Laignel

1996 VIGNETTES (1 to 3 pages)

"Rapunzeleia" - J.P. Treleaven - *I Don't Care What You Smell* #2

Honorable Mention: "Disturbance" - Marti Schuller - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "Silent Night" - M.J. Mink - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "The Legend Of The Queen of Light" - Wanda Lybarger - *Tremor* #9

1996 SHORT STORES (4 to 10 pages)

"Luke-a-Palooza" - Mary Jo Fox - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "Beauty & The Sith" - Cheryl Pryor - *Smelly* #2

Honorable Mention: "Ashes" - Veronica Wilson - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "Chewbacca Goes Shopping" - Z.P. Florian - *Tremor* #9

1996 MEDIUM STORIES (11 to 29 pages)

"Falling" - M.J. Mink - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "The House In The Woods" - Marti Schuller - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "Short Cargo" - Wanda Lybarger - *Bright Center* #6

Honorable Mention: "The Last Of The Jedi" - Z.P. Florian - *Tremor* #9

1996 LONG STORIES (30 pages & over)

"On the Side of Light" - Martie O'Brien - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "Mutual Bonds" - Barbara Anderson - *Flip* #17

Honorable Mention: "Borrowed Dreams" - Z.P. Florian - *Another Sky...* #9

1996 FILKS

"I'd Rather Call You Sweetheart" - Susan Zahn - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "Alderaani Dreaming" - Mary Jo Fox - *Snowfire* #2

Honorable Mention: "Dangerous Dreaming" - Maggie Nowakowska - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: "You're The One I Dream About" - Debbie Kittle - *Bright Center* #6

1996 POEMS

“The Saga According to Darth Vader” - Jacqueline Taero - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: “Chewie to Leia: A Lesson Learned” - Jennifer Moore - *Bright Center* #6

Honorable Mention: “Hold Me” - Yvette Ghilan - *Snowfire* #2

Honorable Mention: “I Am Not Alone” - Jan Callard - *Bright Center* #6

1996 MISCELLANEOUS

Barbara Anderson for a cartoon in *Flip* #17

Honorable Mention: A.G. Steyn for a cartoon in *Bright Center* #6

Honorable Mention: Margaret McNickle for a cartoon in *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: Bert-Olof Lundin for a comic strip in *Sarlaac* #1

1996 COVER ARTIST

Nancy Stasulis for the front cover of *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: Gerald Crotty - back cover - *Tremor* #9

Honorable Mention: A.G. Steyn - front cover - *Bright Center* #6

Honorable Mention: Matt Busch - front cover - *Snowfire* #2

1996 ILLUSTRATION ARTIST

Wanda Lybarger

Honorable Mention: Gerald Crotty

Honorable Mention: Nancy Stasulis

Honorable Mention: Zyene



Star Awards Winners

(photo by Debbie Kittle)

(l to r) Sue Zahn, Cheryl Pryor, Judy Yuenger, Marti Schuller, Barbara Anderson, Wanda Lybarger, Jennifer Moore, Z. P. Florian, Maggie Nowakowska, Judith Klinger, Marie Treleaven, M. J. Mink, Ming Wathne, and Suzanne Godsolve

THE 1996 STAR AWARDS



Lynda Siegel (presenter) and Ming Wathne

(photo by Cheree Cargill)



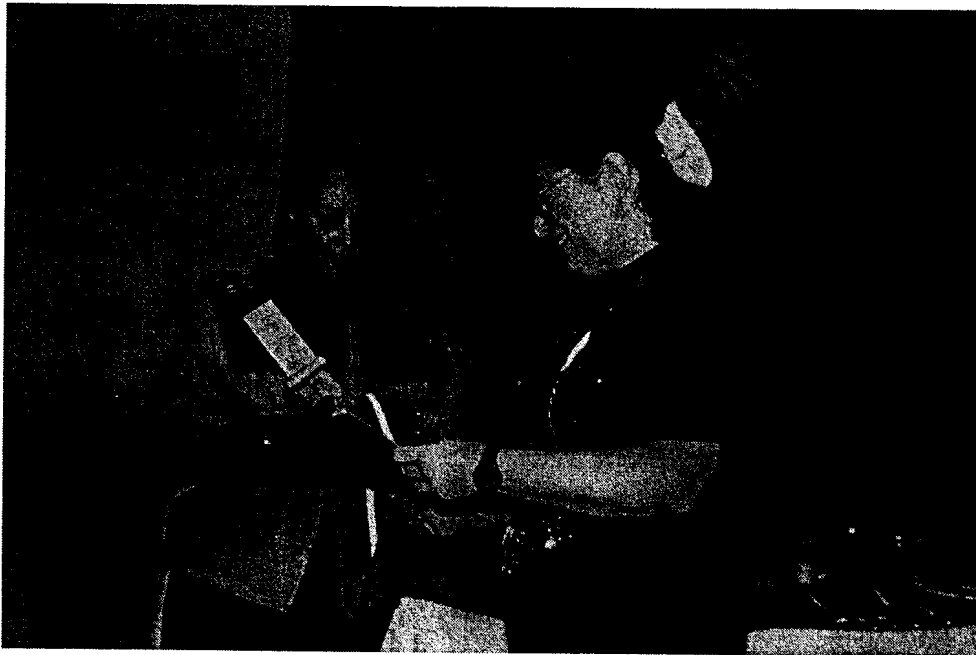
Lynda Siegel, Judith Yuenger and Cheryl Pryor

(photo by Cheree Cargill)



Marti Schuller and Lynda Siegel

(photo by Cheree Cargill)



Lynda Siegel, Judith Yuenger, and M. J. Mink

(photo by Cheree Cargill)



Lynda Siegel, Judith Yuenger and Veronica Wilson (photo by Cheree Cargill)



Sue Zahn and Lynda Siegel (photo by Cheree Cargill)