

World Premiere of the Jedi

Sally Smith

Tuesday, May 24, 1983, dawned clear and hot, a welcome change from the rain and snow of the past weeks. It wouldn't have dared be otherwise. I spent the day in a continuous hurry and a great state of excitement. This was it. This was what I'd been waiting for.

Somehow, my husband and I had scraped up the bucks (\$150) to go to the world premiere of RETURN OF THE JEDI. Although there were several premieres, the one in Denver was designated the world premiere, since Marvin Davis, owner of 20th Century-Fox, lives there. When I read about it, I immediately decided to go. I liked the idea of seeing JEDI before it opened, it was for a good cause (Children's Diabetes, Davis' pet charity), and the thought of being able to take a Star Wars movie off my taxes was just too good to pass up (besides, it was a good excuse to get my husband into a tux). It was the hottest ticket in town, sold out long in advance.

We set off about 6:15 for the theater. The reporters were all out en masse to catch anybody who looked even vaguely important. I've never seen so many cameras and minicams.

Before the movie started, we were subjected to introductions of the Governor, the people in charge of the theater, the people in charge of the charity, the people in charge of...and all of them had to make a speech about how wonderful this event was, blah blah blah. We heard a telegram George Lucas had sent (even that was dull) and (finally!) a short, funny speech from Tony Daniels, apologizing that he was here instead of Dudley Moore. There were also some lousy dancers, one person in a Darth Vader costume, plus two Ewoks.

At last, the lights went down and the movie started (none too soon; I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown). The society

mundane part of the audience was quiet, but the fans made more than enough noise for all. As we left the theater, we got small tote bags printed with the ROTJ logo and full of goodies--a T-shirt, belt buckle, box of cookies and so forth, all of which I've found very useful and nice to have.

Then it was off to the buffet party (quite a spread! Now I know how the other half lives!), where I got chicken l'orange on my dress. The closest I got to fame was when the "Entertainment Tonight" cameraman bumped into me.

Having had enough of high society, we left to go to the other theater to catch the midnight show with friends. We ended up sitting in the balcony on the floor, trying not to think about the dry-cleaning bills.

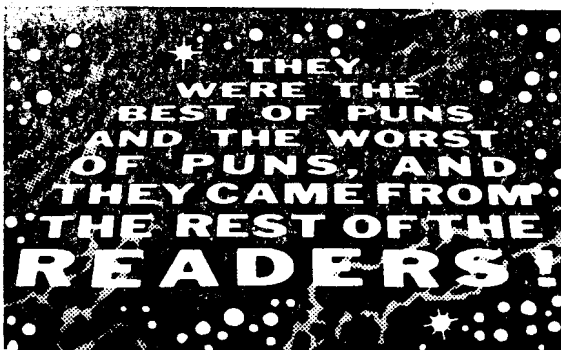
After that showing (and after showing off our formal attire to our friends), we changed into jeans and our new T-shirts and sat outside all night long with the gang to be the first in line for the 11 a.m. show (we'd bought our tickets in January). Nobody got inside ahead of us, believe me. Hell hath no fury like an overtired SW fan who somebody tries to cut in front of. I told one guy to go to the end of the line or I'd beat him up (I actually used much less polite language), and he believed me, even though he was twice my size. Guess the Force really can have a strong influence on the weak-minded!

I finally got to sleep about 4 p.m. Wednesday, after being awake for thirty hours straight, having seen ROTJ three times in sixteen hours, swearing not to do that again.

Until I read last month that they're doing the same thing this year for INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM.

I think I better go dig out my formal. Good thing the chicken came out.

FUNKY WINKERBEAN



Letters...

from a certain point of view

Lucy Nash
4341 Mineral Pt. Rd.
Madison, WI 53705

January 24, 1984

I have heard rumors of a new movement afoot in "Star Wars" fandom that has me very concerned. It seems there is a group of people trying to force all fans to follow their particular line on the development of the characters. In fact, they seem to be downright obsessive about it.

I will agree that Harrison Ford is an attractive man and that the character of Han Solo was fun to watch but these fans are so single-minded that they are unable to see past that actor/character. They are so blind that they apparently don't understand the story. How they ever got the idea that Han was the central character is beyond my ability to understand. If any of them ever checked the title page of the novelization of the first movie they could see right there that these stories are from the "Adventures of Luke Skywalker", not Han Solo. If they had seen the series of reports on the Today Show the week before the opening of "Jedi" they would have seen co-writer Lawrence Kasden talk about how this movie brings about the resolution of Luke's fate, that this was Luke's trilogy, not Han's. Yes, the character of Han did progress but he had to or Leia would have to have dropped him. No one with her maturity could possibly have gone on forever with a guy who, until "Jedi", had never gotten over adolescence. He had to become worthy of her. If he was treated like a buffoon at times, well, that was also his function. Whether these people accept it or not, he was part of the comic relief in "Jedi" and did very well at it. As for this nonsense about Han having to be strong now that Luke has fallen into the Dark Side of the Force, this can only have come about if

these people were asleep during the final moments of the confrontation between Luke, Vader and the Emperor. They missed the part of the scene where Luke tossed away his lightsaber and told the Emperor that he had failed and that Luke would not renounce the Light. Why else would the Emperor have tried to destroy Luke? They also apparently missed hearing Anakin tell Luke that he had been right about him (Anakin), meaning that Luke had sensed good in his father and had brought him back. No other interpretation of these events is rationally possible. But then these people don't sound as though they are entirely rational on this subject.

Even more disturbing than these factual errors is what the actions of these obsessive people is causing. One of the best things about any fandom like Star Wars' is the creativity that it stimulates in people who might otherwise have never tried writing, drawing, and producing a small-press magazine, or fanzine. These Ford/Solo fanatics are, from what I have heard, putting pressure on other fanzine editors to follow their own extremely narrow viewpoint in putting those fanzines together. This is wrong! These people have no right to stifle other creative minds this way. They descend to being merely bullies by doing so. This is contemptible. All of the characters of the SW universe have worth and all deserve to be explored.

The general run of SW fandom has something to answer for in this, too. Bullies can only get away with such tactics if you let them. Bullies are the biggest cowards in the world. The only way to deal with them is to stand up to them. They don't have the right to decide how every fanzine in this country should be run. Show them a united front against their foolish behavior and they'll crumple. They are obviously a bunch of adolescents, who, like the

character they are so obsessed with, have a lot of growing up to do. Don't allow them to splinter fandom. Eventually they'll destroy it.

One other point--while I am sure the Han Solo who existed for most of the 3 movies would have literally basked in all this slavish devotion, the Han at the end of "Jedi" would have been completely oblivious to them. As for Harrison Ford, from what I've seen and read about him, he wouldn't like all this fuss, either. Far from being flattered, I'd be willing to bet he'd develop a case of terminal embarrassment.

I do not fear these people. They are not worthy of fear. As long as they continue to be so irrational there is no good reason to take them seriously. I will give them all the attention they deserve--none.

((Editor's Note: This letter caused me a good bit of consternation, first of all trying to decide whether I should print it or not; but then I decided to stand by SE's stated "open forum" policy. I won't comment on her allegations regarding wrongdoing by some segments of fandom. I don't know if Ms. Nash has had some unfortunate incident or if she is the victim of vicious gossip. I tend to suspect the latter. However, I do want to comment on her statement that a group of fans are trying to force zine editors to print only their viewpoint. I have been in fandom for 13 years, most of that time involved in some sort of fan publishing and most of it as an editor. Not once in that entire time has any group or individual approached me or attempted to coerce me into printing only their viewpoint. I don't believe I have ever heard any other editor mention this problem either. I think we would all be most interested in hearing from anyone who has. If this is going on in fandom, it needs to be exposed, and if it's just gossip, it needs to end right now.))



Michelle Malkin
6649 Castor Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19149

February 26, 1984

I didn't think it was possible, but the last issue was even better than the previous two. This is great--keep it up!

Lots of letters to comment on this time, so I'll get right to it.

Chris Jeffords: Just had an interesting discussion with Tim Blaes about "what if the Empire isn't completely overthrown" or other possible developments after ROTJ. What if the governors all try to set up their own little empires? What if the Corporate Sector (a secondary universe, but still good for story ideas) tries to keep right on ruling its own sector? How about warlords, gangsters and dictators taking over various and sundry worlds? What if some worlds don't want to be reunited under a New Republic? After all, the old one fell apart in the end. Besides, was the Old Republic a full governing body or did it lead a loose confederation of independent worlds, sort of like our United Nations? (In response to the editor's note about Mon Mothma--the lady was mentioned in the novelization as being the person who originally organized the Rebellion and is its leader. She did not take Leia's place. It was never stated that Leia was actually the leader of the Alliance in movie or book.) Good idea about Jabba possibly being Force sensitive and using this to help him in his rise to gangster warlord. Quite possibly he doesn't even know he's using the Force, but just thinks

he has a few tricks that work for him. (This is sort of how I see Palpatine's development as a Force-user, only he comes to realize his talent for what it is and to much greater effect.) As for your letter now being the LoC That Ate The Letterzine, go to it! The longer the letters, the better I like 'em! ((Editor's note: I love long detailed LoCs, too, but--oh! my aching fingers after I get through typing them!--ha))

Mary Urhausen: Loved your letter. As long as it was, I couldn't find one thing in it that I disagreed with. Re your comment to Carole Regine, I am writing a story that partially involves Luke's possible left over feelings for his sister. It's a "Luke falls to the Dark Side" story--something I don't believe happened in ROTJ, but still a terrific story idea. Funny coincidence, too. You mentioned that you had stopped writing for ten years before you started writing again in the SW universe. The same exact thing happened to me. After writing some stories, articles and poems in the ST universe, I went into a ten year dry spell. Then, when SW came along, I suddenly found myself with the itch to write again. I've been at it for over five years now and have no desire to stop. In fact, I've gotten to the point where I'm ready to take my SW universe and develop it as my own universe for possible pro writing. Since SW is such a wide-open universe, leaving so much for us to develop on our own, it is easy to develop much that can be used after all the SW references are deleted. It's fun to contemplate this, and I've even started outlining what I hope will be my first pro novel. (This goes right along with the reply to Ann Wortham's letter in SE#2 that I was unable to fit into my letter in SE#3. If you have in-born writing talent, then writing media fiction as a hobby helps to hone those talents so that you may someday go pro. Fannish readers are some of the toughest critics I know. Besides, if Jacqueline Lichtenberg and Jean Lorrain from ST fandom can go pro, why can't some of us from SW fandom?) In response to your question about what Luke and Han say to each other at the Ewok celebration, I'm beginning to think that the recent version of the movie has

cut the bit between Han and Luke shorter than it originally was. I saw it several times where it looked like Han said, "Are you okay?" to Luke and Luke replied, "I'm fine." Now, it seems that Han doesn't say anything, but Luke still nods and says, "I'm fine." Strange.

Barbara Tennison: Your comments on Luke's reaction to learning that Leia was his sister make a lot of sense. Perhaps he was aware all along that his strong attraction to Leia wasn't a romantic one, but couldn't figure out the reason for it. Perhaps the same reasoning would explain Leia's reaction to finding out from Luke that she is his sister. She always did treat him in a very sisterly fashion; there were never any indications of romantic feelings for him from her. So perhaps, she had the same questions in her mind about her feelings for Luke all along. In that case, having her say, "Somehow I've always known" would also make a lot of sense.

Carole Regine: Very good point about Luke's hatred being powered by love during the final lightsaber battle between him and Vader. This doesn't necessarily make it a good thing, but there is a good reason for its existence. There has to be a difference between hatred brought on by a threat to a loved one and hatred caused by selfish reasons. Only in degree, perhaps, but it must exist.

Ann Wortham: You ask who the hero in the SW saga really is. Why, it's Wedge Antilles, of course! Who saves Luke's life in both ANH and TESB and then goes on to assist in the destruction of the second Death Star? Come on, all you Wedge fan, now is the time to speak out for your hero!

Debbie Gilbert: I agree with you that Luke's calling out to his father for help was not a sign of weakness, but I don't see it as grasping at a last possible solution only, either. This is an excellent explanation, but I also see Luke reaching out to his father because he can still sense the conflict going on in him. Of course, Luke wants to help himself, but he wants to help Vader, too. If Vader doesn't do something, they are both lost. Luke will die (and possibly the Rebellion with him), but Vader

will remain the Emperor's slave for the rest of his life.

Martie Benedict: There is a perfectly good explanation for George Lucas referring to Luke's "final turn to the bad side of the Force." Once Luke did this and then immediately after rejected it, he would never turn to it again. That was the final time he would do it. As for Yoda's line about "once you start down the dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny"--anything you do dominates your destiny, good or bad. Any kind of choice you make will affect your future, but having made that choice doesn't necessarily mean that you'll always be stuck with it. You can change your mind and try to make some new affects on your destiny. Yoda also said, "Always in motion is the future."

Jean Stevenson: You misquoted my letter in SE2. I never said that the examination of the idea that Luke has possibly fallen to the Dark Side is sick. It should be clear that what I said and meant was that the totally negative pursuit of that idea or any idea to the degree that it causes the end of several friendships (I know of at least five in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania alone) is sick. We are discussing interpretations of a movie, not World War III. By the way, why are you writing Jedi with a small "j"? Just curious. I agree with you 100% that there is no proof that Han has spent his life catting around the Galaxy. This isn't to say that the gorgeous hunk is virginal, but the way he is drawn in an awful lot of SW fan fiction would either have him dead of a zapped liver or of at least 42 varieties of venereal disease in short order, if not simple exhaustion.

Tim Blaes: I remember that viewing of ROTJ at the theater in Michigan last MediaWest*Con, too. I also remember the whole gang of us being shifted from one room of the theater to another at the last minute. I certainly hope that we'll be seeing "Temple of Doom" at another theater or that this one will have gotten its act together this time. Thoroughly enjoyed your letter in SE3 and the bits of humor you put into it.

Bev Clark: You are definitely right about Luke getting

jumped on no matter how he acts. If he does one thing, a lot of fans will say he's rotten. If he does another, then someone will be sure to call him spineless. The poor guy can't win! The same for the other main characters, but particularly for him, since he is THE main character. Thanks also for pointing out why the number of LoCs to fanzine editors that get actual responses from the editor (other than appearing in the next issue of the zine) is very small. Aside from working full-time jobs (including being a housewife--that's just as much a full-time job as any other), putting the zine together (including typing, graphics, corresponding with artists and writers, trying to carry on regular correspondence with friends), there is barely enough time left over for eating and sleeping. But, this does not mean that these LoCs are not wanted. Please, fellow fen, send LoCs to the zines you read whenever you can. These LoCs are the only way writers, artists and editors know that their work is or isn't appreciated.

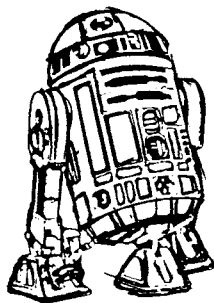
Marcia Brin: If Han hadn't wanted Luke to leave the mission on Endor, I'm sure that he would have said so very vehemently. Han is not one to pull his punches. But, he must have realized that what Luke said he had to do was just as important as what he and Leia and his troops had to do. As I've mentioned in other letters, Luke may now be a Jedi and free to do as he sees fit--with the agreement of the Alliance. It's quite possible that this is the way that the Jedi have always worked--with the military but free to make their own decisions. Also, perhaps if the Emperor's attention hadn't been so strongly on Luke, he might have realized that the Death Star had been breached. So, Luke's sacrifice does serve a possible purpose. At the end of ROTJ, Luke does not look alone and lonely to me. He could just be standing off by himself to catch his breath and get his thoughts in order. After all, he and everyone else have been through quite a lot. When the Three Stooges put in their astral appearance, Luke looks very happy and even winks at them. When Leia notices that Luke is by himself and comes over to get him, Luke looks very pleased and happy and

gladly returns to his friends. By the way, if we saw Luke hugging and being hugged by everyone at the celebration, it would take up half the movie. We are concerned with the people that he is closest to and who are closest to him. Everyone is celebrating, hugging, dancing, and the idea of success and relief is what GL is probably trying to get across--not the gloomy idea that Luke is being cut off by anyone or doing any cutting off himself. As for the Ewoks, they're so busy dancing and having a good time that they may simply not have noticed that Luke has returned. Why do you stretch "logic" to the breaking point to find grimness that doesn't exist? Also, a friend has pointed out to me the possibility that Luke may never marry because he will be kept so busy seeking out and training new Jedi. My response to that was that Luke is very young. He could spend many years doing this and still have many years in which to marry and raise his own children. In this way, he could live a full life in which he satisfies both his responsibilities and his personal desires. Besides, this is a modern fairy tale. Nowhere is it written that the old fairy tale forms have to be followed exactly. In this tale, the son does defeat the father to take his place, but he does not kill his father (the cackling brainburn case did that), and he takes his place for the good and not just for the sake of taking his place (I realize that you disagree with this, but this is my interpretation).

Melody Corbett: If Han turns out to be a Jedi in wolf's clothing after all, I will be terribly disappointed. It would mean that the Han we have all been shown has all along been a lie--a total fabrication. But, I wouldn't mind having him turn out to be Force-sensitive unbeknownst to himself. In that case, with the proper training from the proper teachers (the little blonde guy and his sister), he could become a Jedi or just a Force-user, if he so chooses and without any change to his personality.

One last comment: I have seen letters in this zine and others in which other fens' opinions are treated scornfully and with sarcasm that closely approaches personal attack. I

have a feeling that this kind of sarcasm is going to be the replacement for personal attack, since some editors won't print personal attacks. As far as I'm concerned, one is as bad as the other because they serve the same purpose--to belittle a person with a differing point of view without actually settling anything.



Barbara Tennison
1834-1/4 Selby Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90025

February 29, 1984

Enjoyed the articles, as usual. One tends to forget Bib Fortuna and this was a good reminder that the character existed and had potential unused in the movie. This is almost a hallmark of the SW films, that even the minor figures are detailed enough to support personalities and histories, all part of the universe's comprehensive background.

Terri Black's black-and-white symbolism article is nicely reasoned--at last, an explanation for all those underlit expanses of interior space in the Imperial vessels, when one might expect something more in the way of surgically harsh overlighting!--but I'd like to add a few comments. I might question whether the white AT-AT walkers and Star Destroyers are much on public view except in battle situations, in which the participants are likely to have predetermined ideas of which side is the right one, but this is a minor point and does not invalidate the philosophical side of the argument. While the article gives a consistent interpretation of what the Jedi characters wear in terms of light (or white) vs. dark (or black), the Jedi's clothing may

have other messages as well. I note that Obi-Wan and Yoda wear more neutral colors than anyone else (so does Luke, on Dagobah the first time). This may signal that the Jedi consider themselves politically independent of the Empire and the Alliance. They associate with the Alliance by choice, not definition. Certainly I've seen some arguments lately that Luke "deserted" the Alliance by following the Jedi leaders' instructions, which would mean the Jedi were separate from the Rebels in some sense.

Jean Stevenson's article seems to suggest (to me) that Leia may have been the "other" in that she has already been using the Force in her political activities to date: that would be, as an Alliance leader and quite possibly as a Senator before she openly joined the Rebellion. The Force's influence on the "weak minded" could have been even more useful in the Senate than in physical battles. (I'm sure someone has mentioned this before in connection with Leia being the "other", but it bears restating.) It would be a use of the Force for both knowledge and defense, in a milieu where knowledge often is a defense! In supporting the Rebel Alliance, Leia is almost automatically in the role of questioning authority, although she does not appear to question the need for opposition to the Empire which is the Alliance's only authority. One hopes--and in so intelligent a character, assumes--that she did look at all the alternatives before deciding to put herself at the service of this particular bunch of Empire-opposers.

Han Solo's, uh, carnal reputation has often been exaggerated by fan stories to the point of incredibility. Part of this may be an expression of the fan opinion of Han Solo (or Harrison Ford) apart from his role in SW, and part may be follow-the-leader. However, it seems justifiable to say that the character as given in the movie--a foot-loose, independent, less-than-strictly-law-abiding, self-confident and healthy man in the prime of adulthood--would have acquainted himself with some variety of whatever sort of sexual partners he would accept. The obvious suggestion in terms of logistics, that Chewbacca was his most available partner,

has not been picked up for a number of reasons (if nothing else, cross-species sex is problematic at best). It is true that an independent space-travelling trader might not have a lot of time out from earning his living to devote to romance, but his demeanor with Leia herself suggests that he'd had a little practice at the pastime.

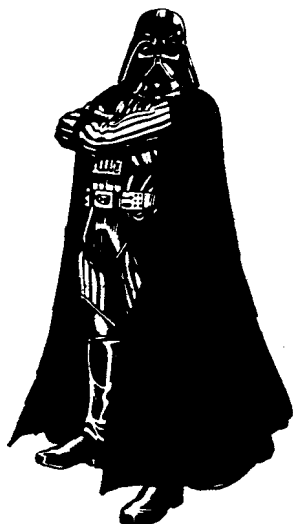
The anti-Luke stance taken by some fans has surprised me considerably. Luke was clearly the central character of the story structure (though he has strong competition for audience interest in Han and Leia), and almost by definition could not be a bad guy in the end. This is a Saturday-matinee kids' movie, in outline (Lucas says so). The many and subtle arguments advanced for Luke's turning toward the Dark Side illuminate the complexity of his moral problems, but I fear that they are not ultimately convincing. Luke may deal with moral questions in the course of his actions, but he still comes out on top by any measure I can see: His overriding moral goal seems to be to reconvert Darth Vader to the light side, in which he is finally successful. His side wins. He rejoins his friends, who give an open appearance of welcoming him as a valued participant in the battle. More important, he is rejoined by his Jedi mentors who also beam approval. Regardless of what the future may hold (and the dark hints do make this an interesting question, granted), he has won in his part of the battle over Endor.

In answer to Terri Black's query about the canonicity of the radio serial, strictly speaking I'd have to call them another secondary source. I must admit, though, that the simple fact of their being a dramatic presentation, even without pictures, makes them "feel" more like original SW instead of explanations of SW (like the novelizations) or SW filtered for young children (like the storybooks).

In regard to Terri's discussion of the progressively more three-dimensional space battles, I think it was one of Larry Niven's characters who observed that planet dwellers' view of reality is distorted by the presence of a massive gravity well. True three-dimensional (or four-dimensional, counting the time

element) perception is rare hereabouts; we haven't needed it much yet. That's a really good point of pure science fiction.

In answer to Marcia Brin's letter (and less directly to a comment in Jean Stevenson's), she is quite right that the scenario in which Leia might be allowed an active role in galactic affairs only if she is sterile, is extremely sexist. It is an extrapolation of the extremely unequal ratios of the sexes shown on screen in the SW universe, and is intended to illustrate the sexism inherent in that fact. I quite agree that Leia was probably intended at least partly as a reminder of the life and fertility that are missing from the battlefield, but why should there be only one (two, counting the Ion Cannon Operator; at any rate a miniscule ratio) such reminder? In a technologically advanced society there is little reason to keep women from being soldiers, pilots, X-wing techs, or whatever, and some good reasons to put them into these roles--smaller body mass, faster reaction time, etc. I doubt if the filmmakers intended to imply that human women in the SW universe were all Imperial loyalists, weaklings, or broodmares (and their treatment of Leia does not suggest it). But in a society which has advanced medicine and technology, the skewed gender ratio requires an explanation. MTFBWY!



Carole Regine
458 E. Elkhart St.
Philadelphia, PA 19134

March 9, 1984

Yipes! I didn't think my comment that a married Han Solo would "probably commit adultery ...", etc. would raise such vigorous protest from certain folks! Dr. Mary Urhausen asks where the "Intergalactic Stud Myth" originated (INTER-galactic?! Wow, I figured maybe just a few star systems in one galaxy...) Cheree's suggestion that this myth was born in the fantasies of horny fen is funny and partially true, but we horny Hanatics didn't twist an image of Unworldly Innocence to suit out dreams. Han, when we met him in the cantina, was a tough, sarcastic smuggler rubbing elbows with the scum of the Galaxy. He didn't object to working for a criminal and his "me first" attitude stuck out like a sore thumb. Hard to assume that this guy sought only Meaningful Relationships with women ... We never see Han linked with any women (except Leia) on screen but I think Mr. Spock's analogy to human characteristics and behavior is applicable here: "If I drop a hammer on a high gravity planet, I need not see it fall to know that it has, indeed, fallen." Men who choose Han's former lifestyle aren't usually known to share Maiden Aunt Martha's views about sex. Some might have exaggerated Han's energy, but I doubt that an Innocent has been slandered.

For the reasons stated above, I'd find it difficult to believe that Han practiced sexual abstinence from his first wink at Leia till his chosen lady was ready for romance. By TESB, Han has changed a bit from the man we met in ANH, but he hasn't suffered an Anakin Skywalker Personality Death, to be reborn as an entirely different person.

By ROTJ, Han has committed himself to the Rebellion and (at least informally) to Leia. I do not believe Han will desert the Alliance or "abandon" Leia. (Jean Stevenson, please take note: I never suggested that Han would do either. In fact, I did say, "I can't imagine Han and Leia parting company".) Han has changed in the course of three movies and, if he and Leia do marry, I don't see him slip-

ping off to the local brothel two days later. But what will happen to their relationship when peace comes to the Galaxy? Will Han enjoy his role as Solid Citizen of the Restored Republic? The characters I saw on screen would have to suffer a Death of Personality to enjoy a safe and secure, routine life. Love for Leia might stop Han from revving up the Falcon and taking off for parts unknown, but I think he'd always look back at a more colorful and adventurous past. Eventually, I believe he'd take off for limited periods trying to recapture some of his old freedom. And given what I believe his lifestyle once was, I do think he'd easily drift into sexual wandering. I don't see Han as a shallow stud incapable of love and commitment, but I would predict a very difficult marriage and broken promises if Han's emotional commitments tie him to a "world" he'll never belong in.

IF... It's all speculation, folks. So, if anyone out there wants to predict a happier future for Han (without turning him into either Jesus or Dagwood Bumstead), I'd love to hear it.

To Marcia Brin: I think Han's a positive sweetheart, too, but I can't agree that he always was such a nice human being--and I don't think Leia considered him a "nice man" in TESB. Leia's reaction to Han, on the Falcon en route to Bespin, indicates to me that she still saw him as something of a mercenary. He'd risked his life for Luke's and he saw Leia safely off Hoth, but Leia still expected him to leave her and desert the Alliance. (Had she expected him to return after settling with Jabba, she'd have had no reason to be angry over his intention to leave.) Yet, seeing him in this light, she fell in love with him. I've always suspected that Leia was more attracted by Han's courage, self-confidence and blunt honesty than by any hope that he could life up to her standards of what "nice men" ought to be. I won't argue with anyone who points out the virtues Han began to display, even as early as ANH, but I don't think Leia believed she'd fallen in love with a "nice man". By the way, I agree with your thought that there's a difference between presenting an argument and just

dismissing another's opinion. Anyone who insists that their opinion is The One and Only Truth has taken a giant step backward into childish thinking. IDIC!

To Terri Black: Just wanted to say thanks for an excellent article on the symbolism of black and white in the SW Saga. You called attention to many details I'd never given thought to previously.

To Tim Blaes: Loved your list of ten ideas for "what if" stories. May I add an eleventh? What if Vader had learned of his children's birth while Luke and Leia were still toddlers? What if he'd tracked them down and brought them home to be raised on the Dark Side?

To Mary Urhausen: Fascinating theory that Vader might not be Leia's father. Wouldn't this sort of pregnancy require Mrs. Skywalker to have...er...indulged her passions with two different men within a rather brief span of time? Any notion who the happy father (of Leia) might've been? Hmmm... Join me, Mary, and together we'll slander the whole Galaxy! But seriously, neither of our speculations is likely to turn up on screen and as much as I enjoy fanfic, I do want to see GL's version of the Past and Future. I completely agree with your thought that if we bite the hand that gave up SW, we're only hurting ourselves. ROTJ wasn't perfect, but what is? Tearing it to pieces is no way to ask for six more episodes.

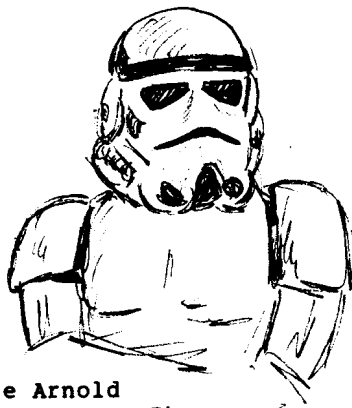


Carol Peters
PO Box 5353
Salton City, CA 92275

March 9, 1984

In reading some of the letters I wonder if they saw the same RETURN OF THE JEDI as I did. Didn't anyone go to see it just for the fun and sheer joy of watching another installment in the STAR WARS Saga? I was there the first day, first showing and it was very exciting. Out of the 350 people there to see it, all but 25 were adults. It's hard to express the feeling of anticipation that was running through the audience while we waited for the movie to begin. We had an extra long wait because they let us into the theater early due to the temperature--at 10 a.m. it was already 110 degrees!

To answer Danaline Bryant about Luke's aunt and uncle on Tatooine, if you read page 66 of the ROTJ novel, Obi-Wan tells Luke that he was sent to live with his brother, Owen.



Rose Arnold
325 N. Perry Pkwy
Oregon, WI 53575

March 18, 1984

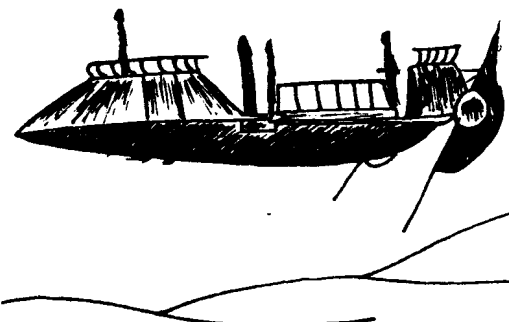
I don't much like to see the continuation of the Han vs. Luke arguments, but as long as everyone is civil, a little disagreement can't hurt.

I wish I could write such literate, cogent and intelligent letters like those in SE. Even when I disagree with one, it's usually so well written, it's very persuasive. Just proves what I hoped would happen: SW lives! At least for a while.

Questions or "canon" about SW I'd like to see answered or discussed:

Has anyone ever dissected the name Millennium Falcon? It has a marvelous ring, but it really doesn't make any sense! Most of GL's other names have some further significance besides their inherent sound, but a "thousand-year bird"?

Another question--I can't be the only person who saw Luke "tell" Leia he loved her in TESB. It happened almost at the end, after Leia and the Falcon have turned back to pick Luke off the antenna; he is on the bunk in the Falcon, Leia is ministering to his injuries, she kisses him on the forehead and says she will be back. As she turns away from him, he turns his head, follows her out of the scene with his eyes and mouths "I love you." I've always wondered but especially now after the revelation of JEDI, whether Mark ever actually said it out loud and it was eliminated on the final soundtrack because of the coming "relationship". Maybe the scene was done that way just to tantalize the audience or maybe as an echo of the AMERICAN GRAFFITI "blonde in the the white T-Bird" who mouths "I love you" to Curt which led to his frantic search for her through the rest of the movie: A young man's search for his "dream girl." I've never been able to figure out how Luke could change so fast from declaring his love (in his mind at least) to the "understanding friend" at the end of TESB. (Poor Luke--I still think he got shafted all the way around.) Maybe I'm just nit-picking, but these two things have always bothered me (as well as Han the "Corellian" and the obvious one--we really aren't told until JEDI that Luke's home planet is named Tatooine. In TESB it's just a "rendezvous". I noticed in TESB and ROTJ they are a bit more careful to identify where the characters are and where the action is happening).



Ann Wortham
P. O. Box 421
Cedar Hill, TX 75104

March 18, 1984

Many thanks to all the readers of SOUTHERN ENCLAVE who responded to my letter with offerings of support and friendship; it's good to know that the rest of fandom resents being treated as illiterates just as much as I do. I also appreciate the many fans who pointed me towards Harry Chapin's song "Mister Tanner."

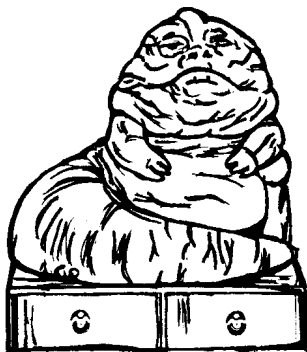
I have to agree with Mary Urhausen when she says that fans who are irritated about ROTJ should quit griping and write their own alternate universes. That is, after all, part of what fanzines are all about! I also agree with her view of Darth Vader--I was never a Vader fan until ROTJ. I actually cried when he died!

Michelle Malkin's comments about Luke facing his Dark Side really hit home. It seems pretty obvious to me that Luke rejected his Dark Side when he refused to kill Vader; after all, throwing his lightsaber to the side was a terribly final act! Once he gave up his weapon he didn't have a chance against the emperor.

To Tim Blaes: I can't believe that the OSWFC would have the nerve to tell you that you were presumptuous and stupid for submitting an idea to them. Just who do they think they are? If the fans don't join their fan club, they won't have a fan club for very long! This attitude amazes me.

One last comment regarding Melody Corbett's question about the reversal of the twin suns in ROTJ. The only answer I can think of is artistic license. The only alternative is that somebody screwed up and we all know that can't be true!

((Editor's Note: There may be a clue in the novelization of ANH. Second paragraph of chapter 1: "Yet both massive G1 and G2 stars orbited a common center with peculiar regularity, and Tatooine circled them far enough out to permit the development of a rather stable, if exquisitely hot, climate." I don't know how scientifically accurate this is but I guess it's plausible. We really don't know anything about the orbit of Tatooine and the two stars.))



Barbara Brayton
1550 Sherman #303
Denver, CO 80203

P. J. LaVasseur
1650 Wabash
Denver, CO 80220

March 20, 1984

My friend Pam and I decided to pool our efforts in one letter rather than write two that said essentially the same thing. She has read more fantasy than I, so any such references are hers. So here we go.

Chris Jeffords: Why does the central hero have to marry the heroine in fantasy? Tolkien didn't follow that pattern, in fact there were no Hobbit heroines. The creator of a fantasy can bring as much reality in as he or she chooses to. Kurtz' Kelson Haldane is still a bachelor at the end of High Deryni.

Did you mean to make a distinction between an "epic hero" and simply a "hero"? If so, what is your source of reference material? What makes Indy a "hero" and Luke an "epic hero"? Is Alric Morgan from Deryni a "hero" and Moreta "epic"? Why?

Regarding Indiana Jones: yes, he went into the Well of the Souls, but not alone (it takes two to handle the Ark, you know). Whether he actually "conquered" his fear is debatable; this wasn't your average fear--it was a phobia. The first thing he said after the encounter with the cobra (and he sure looked afraid there) was, "Sallah, get down here!" Then he removed as many sources of fear as he could. It's been a while since we've seen the film, but from the novel we had the impression he couldn't wait to get out of there.

Good point about fan writing. Don't forget Jean Lorrah. She won her English doctorate by using fan writing to sharpen her skills.

Mary Urhausen: Bravo! It can't be said often enough! The Saga is GL's to do with as he pleases, just as Pern is McCaffrey's, Gwendydd is Kurtz', the Land is Donaldson's and, well, you get the idea.

Good question! Where did the Han Solo As Superstud myth come from? Likewise, where did the idea originate that Han's a boozier? No doubt from the same fertile minds.

Speeder bikes starting fires? Pardon if you hear faint laughter, but has anyone out there tried to start a fire in a rain forest? Even dry, seasoned wood still picks up a certain amount of moisture; there's no such thing as a blazing campfire that becomes a bonfire. If left unattended for any length of time, it will go out and just smoulder in that kind of environment.

Michelle Malkin: Hi! Just wanted you to know we pretty much agree with what you said. On the subject of questioning authority--when Luke tells Ben, "I won't kill my father," Ben replies, "Then the Emperor has already won." Yet if Luke did kill Vader, the Emperor would have won, because that's exactly what the Emperor wanted Luke to do. Interesting, eh?

A little LOUDER, please! Luke saw his artificial hand and his father's electronic stump; then and there, he "realized suddenly how much he had become like his father. Like the man he hated." The entire Luke/Vader/Emperor segment is about Luke confronting and rejecting the Dark Side. Quoting again from the novel:

"Luke stared at his father beneath him, then at the Emperor, then back at Vader. This was Darkness--and it was the Darkness he hated. Not his father, not even the Emperor. But the Darkness in them. In them and in himself.

"And the only way to destroy the Darkness was to renounce it, for good and all. He stood suddenly erect, and made the decision for which he'd spent his life in preparation.

"He hurled his lightsaber away. 'Never! Never will I turn to the Darkside! You have failed, Palpatine. I am a Jedi,

as my father was before me.'" (emphasis original)

As you say, Luke is somewhat apart from his friends just by virtue of who and what he is. But that's not the same as saying that they have rejected him or shut him out. They have loved him and are always there when he needs them. You know if the Saga were only about responsibility and duty, if it were devoid of love and human emotions, the heart would go right out of it. It would be dull and cold.

Terri Black: We understand your point of view about shock and the showing of emotions. It often takes both of us a day to emotionally react to news that is jarring, such as a death in the family. Why can't Leia be the same way? Surely there are other people that have the same delayed response time to sudden, unexpected news? And, really, do we need scene #125--"Leia Falls Apart"?

Bev Clark: We essentially agree with you, but in a different way. Of course, Luke cannot love his father, as his father, because he has never known him. He probably has a love that has been built from an image, however. He can feel a compassion for him, if we understand the definition correctly, "a deep feeling of sharing the suffering of another." Even the Emperor sees this motivation in Luke when he tells Vader, "His compassion for you will be his undoing." As Michelle pointed out, surely he can sense the conflict in his father through the Force. Luke could offer this compassion and sympathy freely, without conditions. However, it's up to the person on the receiving end to accept or reject it.

You are so right; it seems Luke is damned if he does and damned if he doesn't. As another example, there is the matter of whether he did or did not invite Leia to join him at Anakin's funeral pyre. If he did ask her, he'd be accused of insensitivity; if he didn't, he'd be accused of the same thing. It's our feeling that whatever he did, her welfare would be uppermost in his mind. Perhaps he sensed intuitively that she was not really prepared for the experience. Her only knowledge is of Darth Vader; of Anakin Skywalker she knows less than Luke does, which is not

much. We know how hard this had been on Luke; what will she go through when it all sinks in?

Pam and I are both confirmed Han Solo fans. That doesn't mean we go on fault-finding expeditions where Luke or any other character is concerned. We have no objection to Luke being the pivotal character in "the Adventures of Luke Skywalker". It just makes Han's role all that sweeter. He's a bonus as it were, and we can handle more than one hero in a story.

Marcia Brin: We'll state it again, maybe not in Dolby, but in stereo nonetheless, the three reasons Luke left the Endor mission.

(1) He has become a liability to the group rather than an asset. He knows this earlier when he senses Vader on the Executor, and knows Vader senses him on the shuttle. "I'm endangering the mission; I shouldn't have come." Later he tells Leia, "Vader is here...now, on this moon...I felt his presence. He's come for me. He can feel when I'm near. That's why I have to go. As long as I stay, I'm endangering the group and our mission here. I have to face him."

(2) He's going to face Vader, something both Ben and Yoda told him he must do. The means by which he accomplishes this are left up to him.

(3) He's going because of his firm conviction (not mere wishful thinking) that there is still good in his father, and that he, Luke, can reach it. And, he is right. If that is selfishness, so be it.

Also, whether he intends it or not (and it well may have entered his mind), Luke functions as a very effective diversion. From the very minute Luke and Vader cross sabers, the Emperor's attention focuses on them and away from the battle going on around the Death Star II. The Emperor's sole concern now is obtaining himself a new Dark Lord. Overconfidence is his weakness and a fatal one. He loses Vader, he loses a potential replacement, he loses the battle, and he loses his life. The score is Luke 4, Emperor 0, a pretty impressive score for someone who is not fulfilling his responsibilities.

Something confuses us. Chris Jeffords said, "Hasn't he (Luke) already seen from Ben's example

that corporeal death doesn't mean extinction? Shouldn't he take comfort in that fact?" But you say, "The films say you cannot be one with the Force until you die, which is hardly comforting." Who's right?

Whoa galloping hoofbeats! How can you have feelings of total oneness with something whose potential you are just beginning to understand? If you must know 100% about everything to be a Jedi, then there would be none. Even Kenobi and Yoda were still learning, and they had decades and centuries to perfect their comprehension. But you do reach a point where your understanding, your knowledge of what it can do, of what it means are such that you can call yourself a Jedi. That is where Luke is now. He believes in himself, he believes in the Force, he understands that it is a part of him, and he of it. This enables him to accomplish what he does in JEDI. And, of course, he will continue to learn. As to "tricks and nonsense", Yoda and Ben aren't above using them when they serve a purpose. Nothing Luke does in JEDI is for the purpose of showing off, "look what I can do." He has some definite goal in mind.

Leia will certainly think of Luke as more than a "cherished friend". He's her brother, the only one she has, and her only living blood relative. It's natural for her to feel closer to him. There's no reason why she can't move in more than one circle. When you marry or move away, you don't cut yourself off from your family. Leia is the first to go to Luke when he arrives on the command ship. She's the first to greet him at the celebration and it is she who draws him back into the group.

Of course, Han is all the things you say he is. We got the impression he told the rebel officer he'd meet them back at the bunker at 0300 because he fully expected to find Leia before then. We don't think he's going to leave her out there on a moon crawling with Imperials.

Alright, we give up. What book and author explains the entire theory of the monomyth? If the statement you made is correct, then explain why Luke, while still dealing with Vader, stopped, thought, then threw his saber away, declaring, "I am a

Jedi, like my father before me." Somehow, we don't think he is referring to Vader; he hasn't become Vader. By stopping short of killing Vader, throwing away his saber and therefore his anger, he has made atonement with the ogre. He has broken the circle by not becoming Vader. Likewise, Luke puts himself between his father and the Emperor while Vader is still the "enemy", hardly the actions of someone who is treating Vader like "chopped liver." The Emperor is still a very real threat, Vader at that point is in no real shape to defend himself, and Luke knows it. If Luke were really as callous as he's made out to be, he'd have left the broken body in the black armor behind. At that point it was just a body, not Anakin, not Vader. The Emperor knows when Luke throws his saber away, he has lost him. He failed to win Luke over, to make him take his father's place at his side. His "So be it, Jedi" is an insult because Luke won't join the cozy little cir cleof Darkside followers. Remember the next line, "If you will not be turned, you will be destroyed."

Begging and screaming, um. Apparently, if Luke lies there and dies quietly, he's a dignified dead hero and therefore unrepachable. He might even be allowed to scream, because torture hurts, as long as he does not sacrifice his dignity. But, if he takes one last chance to reach the goodness he knows to be in Vader, to give him one last opportunity to redeem himself, then he is "begging". If the question is, is Luke ready to risk his life for others, the answer is yes, and he has proven this many times. Martyrdom is all very well, but if you are going to die, make it count for something.

Which leads to the question, what would Luke's death on Bespin have accomplished except more useless sacrifice? That question leads to another one. Wouldn't Leia and Lando have been selfish after having "heard" Luke, to say, "Forget him, we have to save ourselves." If Luke is selfish for leaving the group on Endor, then so are Leia, Chewie and Lando for going off at the beginning of ROTJ to rescue a friend whose predicament is really his own fault. Ben Kenobi selfishly leaves the

group in SW to confront his former pupil, knowing he will probably die (in fact he sets up his own death) when he would have been more valuable to the Rebellion alive, teaching the ways of the Force to Luke and to anyone else that might show potential. Seems Luke wasn't the only selfish person in the Saga; looks like he keeps good company.

Finally, we offer this generic paragraph, a little food for thought. It's fun to speculate and theorize about a story ahead of time, but when you enter a theater, or sit down with that next book in a series, you'd better leave the preconceived notions behind, and watch or read it with an open mind. Otherwise, you're setting yourself up for whole heaps of disappointment. Your criticisms, which of course are healthy, will tend to be disoriented and questionable at best. You can't constructively criticize if you are inserting what doesn't exist, or having to twist or distort in order to ease whatever betrayal you feel. It's something to think about.



Danaline Bryant
4606 Lincoln
Lawton, OK 73505

March 20, 1984

I think I'll start off my letter with an item from the Bad Joke Dept. (courtesy of READER'S DIGEST): "If Ella Fitzgerald married Darth Vader, she'd be Ella Vader." ((Editor's Note: Did you know that Darth Vader's family comes from Southern California? You never heard of the Oakland Vaders?))

Speaking of our favorite Repentant Jedi, has anyone read

an interview with James Earl Jones concerning his contribution to the Saga? I've heard something from all the other major actors but nothing from Jones. I wonder what his feelings are about his wonderful addition to that character's persona.

I have heard that there will be a second album released that will contain the missing music from ROTJ. Anybody know if this is true? ((Ed's Note: there is an album out called THE STAR WARS TRILOGY that is a combination of music from all three movies, including two never recorded pieces, "TIE Fight" and "Vader's Death" from ROTJ, but those two are really such incidental pieces, I didn't feel that I had been missing much. Also, did I dream it or was there a second SW album out in 1977 with additional music on it? I seem to recall debating on buying it but never did and now I can't remember if there ever was such an album or not.))

Does anyone know if TESB will be in re-release any time soon? I read that it was to be out this past fall but it never made it here, if it was released. ((Ed--sigh, yes, again --Rumor persists that TESB and E.T. will be released on videotape sometime this year but so far none of the video stores in Dallas has a concrete date. Perhaps it will show up by the time SE#4 sees print!))

My thanks to Shaun Dawkins and Michael Stubbington for the interview with Michael Carter. I found the whole piece very interesting. I think it says a lot for LFL that they are so careful about the safety of their actors that they even had an optician on the set. When you think of some of the recent incidents involving SFX, you realize many filmmakers could benefit from Lucas' example, also people involved in music videos and commercials (I'm thinking of Michael Jackson's Pepsi burn and Ozzie Osbourne's ridiculous accident). Michael Carter did a wonderful job in bringing Bib Fortuna to life and I enjoyed hearing from Mr. Carter.

Terri Black's article on "The Symbolism of Black and White in Star Wars" was very well-written and fascinating. I enjoyed it and hope to read more of her ideas. She came up

with some amazing insights.

To Chris Jeffords: Liked your thoughts on New Alderaan. However, I don't see the Jedi as a strictly warrior or paramilitary order. Of course, The Word hasn't come down from Mount Lucas on this--so to each his own. My reason for thinking that Obi-Wan served as a general outside the order dates back to my first viewing of ANH and comes largely from Luke's reaction to hearing "that old wizard" called by the title of general. Luke sort of does a double take and (it seems to me) looks at Ben with a new and deeper respect. Luke was, at this point, hell-bent to get into the Academy. His reaction to Ben's explanation of the Force was a sort of "sure--if you say so" look and he didn't seem that interested in hokey religions at that point. But he did seem impressed that this old man was once a general. I think he always liked Ben and I don't think he looked to him as a mentor 'til after Leia called him General Kenobi. I do agree with you that the Jedi would have some system of rank but the term "general" just doesn't fit in with my conception of them.

To Michelle Malkin: I liked your thought that Luke might have passed a test set by Yoda when he left Dagobah. I never thought of it that way but it is a possibility. I want to comment on something you asked in SE#2. You wondered why Luke's Jedi mind-trick didn't work on Jabba. In ANH, Obi-Wan said that "the Force can have a great influence on the weak-minded." Jabba is many things but he isn't weak. Therefore, Luke was not able to influence Jabba's thinking as he was able to do with Bib Fortuna.

To The Editor: Hey, I really like your idea about the Alliance forming a splinter government and a state of war continuing with the weakened Empire. Now, that could make for some fascinating stories. I really feel that the Empire is dead but I can still enjoy stories that take off in different directions.

To Barbara Tennison: Agree with your comments that only people who are "actively and consciously" using the Force can be recognized by other Force-users. It's the only explanation why Vader didn't

sense his kinship to Leia. And, I think, it would be especially easy, at this point in time, to perceive Force use. Force-users (if not Force-sensitives) are few and far between.

To Carole Regine: You make some good points about Obi-Wan. I liked your "a less patient student" would have rebelled against him. Made me realize how quickly Luke turned aside his anger and feelings of betrayal. Remember his "Ben, why didn't you tell me?" from TESB and the hurt that came through in that line? This scene with Obi-Wan shows Luke's maturity. He doesn't dwell on past injustices inflicted on him but immediately begins to deal with the problems of the present.

To Debbie Gilbert: You made a good point about Luke's calling out to Vader for help. This is another one of those things that is going to be argued over for years, I guess. But like you said, he was grasping for the only possible solution. I cannot see that Luke was asking Vader to sacrifice himself. It was only a call for help. I find no evil, selfish intent in this. It is a reaction to what is happening to him. In pain and fear, self-preservation takes over.

How many ultimately perceive a film (or book, play, any creative work) depends a lot on what you bring within yourself to that film, I suppose. Either it strikes a responsive note in you or it doesn't. For me, with my experiences past and present, ROTJ was a work of art. Perhaps one reason I enjoyed it so much is due to my short time in SW fandom. I only began reading SW fanfic six or eight months before ROTJ premiered. And although I'd always loved the Saga--well, I just wasn't involved in the intense analysis that is so much a part of media fandom. The only expectation I brought with me when I first saw JEDI was a terrible fear that either Han, Luke or Lando would be killed (I got this impression from an interview with Marquand). So I wasn't disappointed by anything--except for the over-abundance of "short help". I do admit to a certain feeling of bittersweet sadness at the end of the film. But I know it's because I've enjoyed these films so much and I just hate the idea that it's all over. (There are so many more

things I want to see with all of these characters.) And this feeling has been increased because Lucas left the fate of the other films up in the air. If he hadn't made all those depressing remarks about retiring we could be, even now, speculating on just who would be right for the part of Anakin and Obi-Wan. And who should play Mom. And will there be a Wookiee in this one. And...

((Editor's Note: Sorry to keep breaking in on you. I've heard a recent rumor that very early pre-production has now started on the first trilogy, specifically on ship design. Also, at a recent con, I saw an alleged "story line" on Chapter III, THE FALL OF THE REPUBLIC. There was an interesting scene in the first part of it involving Captain Antilles (remember him? 3PO's "former master"?), who was piloting a "small saucer-shaped freighter" and had with him a "ten-year-old Corellian cabin boy." Now, that really piqued my curiosity. I didn't read the whole story treatment, since I'd like to leave a little to the imagination, but this was about the fall of Anakin, the rise of Palpatine, and also included Lady Skywalker and Bail Organa! Very interesting material! Back to you...))

As for the question of Palpatine's training or lack of it...well, you're right in one respect. However, no one mentioned that Luke had a sister 'til the third film. I do think that if Palpatine were trained as a Jedi, he was lost to the Dark at a very early stage in his training. I don't think he ever became a fully-trained Jedi knight.

To Martie Benedict: So glad to read that you don't think Luke is tragic or evil. That line of reasoning is (as 3PO would say) quite beyond my capacity. As for Lucas' statement in the PBS special--I suppose this can be interpreted in different ways to lend support to different viewpoints. What GL said was, "In the end, I had a problem in the fight between Luke and his father of why he makes the final turn to the bad side of the Force...Luke makes the final turn to and tries to kill his father." He did say "to" but I felt he was using it to mean "toward" the Dark Side. Luke was very close to "Dark-

ness" at this point and would have been lost to it had he killed his father. But right at the edge, he realizes what's happening and makes the final rejection of the Dark Side. If Lucas (in the PBS special) was saying that Luke had turned to the bad side at this point, then why did Palpatine zap him? The Emperor comes down the steps nearly shivering with glee and says, "Now, fulfill your destiny and take your father's place at my side." And Luke says the bit about "I'll never turn to the Dark Side."

To Melody Corbett: About the interview with Marquand and your question about where does "the young Jedi Knight" come back from. In your letter, you said, "I thought the fight with Vader at the end of the film (TESB) had left him quite shaken." To me, this was what Luke (as Marquand's "young knight") was returning from. Can you imagine how devastating it would be to find out that the idealized father of your imagination turned out to be the supreme monster of the galaxy? To be able to come to terms with that knowledge was what the young knight returned from. And constitutes quite a bit of "positive spiritual change" in my book. I think his "self-imposed exile on Tatooine", working through all of this, would be dramatic and interesting. I think that perhaps part of "normal" Jedi training might include a period of isolation and introspection. (I don't think Luke's training could be called normal or routine--occurring as it does when the Jedi are "on the run" and in hiding.)

To Marcia Brin: I didn't understand two things you said in the last issue. How is it indicated in the films that you can't be one with the Force 'til you die? Yoda sure seemed one with the Force in TEB. Also, what do you mean when you say that only "three shades" care about Luke? All I see at the end of the film is a big party, with everyone happy and singing. What does anyone do that shows you that they don't care about Luke?

I think the reason we never hear Luke speak about the Force is simply because he's not teaching anyone about it, the way Obi-Wan and Yoda are when they talk about the Force.

I can't agree with your view

that Luke is treating Vader like a "piece of chopped liver". The reason he doesn't go to Vader at the time you mentioned is because he was just a tad otherwise occupied--namely, dealing with and getting fried by the Emperor.

As I've said before, I don't think Luke is asking Vader to sacrifice himself. And, according to the PBS special, this was the moment the whole trilogy aimed at. So, while it doesn't work for you, this moment and how Vader/Anakin and Luke responded to it was what the whole darn thing was about. Lucas didn't choose to have Luke act in a "questionable manner", as you propose in your letter.

In SE#2, you said, "The hero of the monomyth is ready to die if need be" and you cite many examples from the trilogy--none of them involving Luke. I can think of three times when Luke made the choice to die, if need be: over the Death Star in ANH; when he stepped off the catwalk in TEB; when he threw away his lightsaber before the Emperor in ROTJ. In your letter in #2, you seemed to think that because Han refused to beg Jabba for his life, it made him more courageous than Luke and more deserving to be the mythic hero. Well, granted, that was an admirable thing for Han to do. Very much in character and I loved it. But don't you think standing defenseless before Palpatine is as courageous as refusing to beg before Jabba?

Also in #2, you mentioned that the Alliance has divorced itself from Luke--that he was not given a job by the Alliance, that he merely tagged along with Han. Two things make this unacceptable to me. First, the same can be said of Leia. She is not given a job--she volunteers to go with Han, just as Luke does. Originally, Leia's change in position with the Alliance in JEDI bothered me. In ANH and TEB, Leia seemed to be one of the principal leaders of the Rebellion. I always thought she was in a position of great power. But in ROTJ, she seems to have no position at all. Well, perhaps each of the people we see in the briefing room is the top leader in their individual cells. That would explain Leia's apparent change in status. What we're seeing here is the innermost circle of Alliance leaders. They are all Very Important

Rebels and wouldn't be allowed on board Ackbar's command ship unless they were trusted implicitly (Luke included). Second, Luke is not ignored by the Alliance. He is the last remaining Jedi. He is fully-trained now--or very close to it. His responsibilities lie with restoring the Jedi and restoring the balance between the light and the dark. He has not been denied a position with the Alliance because of a lack of trust. His position with the Alliance is his status as Resident Jedi. After all, the Alliance has always been shown to revere the Jedi.

You have said several times that Luke has never put the bigger issues above his own self-interest. Well, of course, we simply don't see eye to eye on these matters. But I thought I'd just throw in a thought on the subject. Remember the scene in Ben's hut in ANH? Ben is asking Luke to go to Alderaan with him and Luke says he can't get involved. I've always loved that scene--the way Luke hesitates on the steps there, the music that accompanies that moment, the fact that, in a way, so much depends on this decision being made in this little hut on this out-of-the-way planet. Anyway, I have the impression that Luke was a kid who had never really defied his uncle in even a minor way. I don't think I'd want to cross Owen Lars. But have you thought what Luke would have faced when he got home to Owen and told him that he'd given the droids to Ben? (Ben, of all people!) Luke certainly knows what he's in for--he walks across to R2 and slaps the top of the droid and says, "How am I ever gonna explain all this?" But he knew how important the droids were and was willing to take the heat when he got home. Right or wrong--that's how the scene strikes me. (And forgive me if I'm re-hashing stuff you guys have been talking about for seven years. I'm one of the new kids on the block--so I don't know what's been said before.)

Almost all of your comments on ROTJ have been ones centering on some sort of "Han vs. Luke" theme, which I must admit, I don't understand at all. I like both characters and think they are equally important to the success of the Saga. Although

I agree with Lucas and others who have said that this is Luke's movie, that doesn't mean that I don't like Han Solo. Or that I don't appreciate Harrison Ford. I was very impressed with HF's portrayal--especially when Han comes out of carbon freeze. His eyes don't seem to focus at all and he really looks blind, which is not an easy thing to do. I've never seen blindness portrayed so well. I do wish we could have seen more of Solo but I wouldn't have wanted any of Luke's scenes cut. As I said before, I am a Hanfan and a Lukefan. For me at least, the SW universe is big enough for two heroes.

To Jean Stevenson: It hadn't occurred to me that Fisher's upper anatomy might have been taped (ouch!) because Leia was supposed to be younger than the actress. But I think you're right. And she does change from child to woman in these three films. I was surprised (and pleased) to see Leia's gentle, sort of maternal attitude toward Wicket.

Excuse me...but did you say that now Luke has a "struggle to face, a greatness to achieve"? I thought that was what he was doing in these three films.

I agree completely with Carole Regine's idea that Han might commit adultery--it is a definite possibility and doesn't mean that Han is evil. First of all--just for the sake of discussion--how do we know that's not Standard Operating Procedure in that other galaxy? Our concepts and standards are not necessarily the ones Our Heroes would have. And, secondly, I have a real problem seeing Han settling down and happily going off to the office everyday. And, folks, please--I'm not saying this to put Han down. I like him the way he's shown in the films. I know he has committed himself to Leia, the Rebellion, his friends. And I'm glad he and Leia ended up together at the end of JEDI. But I'm talking about years down the road from Endor. Don't you think space and the Falcon might call to him at times? Could anyone who has lived a thousand adventures be forever content with routine? Could anyone who has "flown from one side of the galaxy to the other" be happy forever on one planet?

This does not mean that I am opposed to the idea that Han

and Leia might live Happily Ever After. I can see that as a possibility. But I have to take into account the man I see on the screen. And I think that the adventurous Corellian spacer I see might not be content to be planet-bound. Doesn't mean they can't work things out--but there might be struggles and compromises in their future.



Jeanine Hennig
510 Alva
Grand Prairie, TX 75051

Wellll, SE keeps getting better and better. (Even if I DID get a copy that had another person's name on it...*snif*) ((Editor's Note: it's a long story--don't ask!)) At any rate, since we moved, and I didn't have time to answer the last ish, I'd better fall to, since I have two ishes to comment upon. (Stop sighing so dramatically, Cheree! I can hear you all the way to Grand Prairie! Which, for you faithful readers, is only a VERY long frog's hop from my ol' stomping grounds of Garland.) ((Ed's Note: For the hopelessly curious, Garland is directly to the northeast of Dallas; Grand Prairie is directly to the west of Dallas.)) So quit talkin' and hoe in, Jenni!

Regarding SE#2:

To Karen Osman--your comment about the "Tricky Dicky of the spaceways" had me howling! And, to make me sad, I find myself agreeing with you. So much, in fact, that I've started this story about Obi-Wan and actually HOW he got Luke to Tatooine... uh, better not go any further; don't want to give it away.

Speaking of giving away... there's been some talk in fandom about people "lifting" certain terms from other writers, as if those writers had a copyright on the word! Hate to tell you,

folks, but we be fine ones to talk of "lifting"! If this rule applied, then there'd be NO SW zines. As an example--and I'm not in any way swinging the cudgel at Maggie Nowakowska, since she's made no comments about this--is the word "enclave." It is NOT stealing to use a word that someone else happens to use, as well! Unfortunately, some people have to try and smudge other's reputations as honest persons over such trivia as this! C'mon, folks...as I said earlier, if we couldn't use the same words for some things, then pretty soon--say a few centuries back--people would have run out of words to write WITH. Not to mention that "Corellian" would be banned, as would "Jedi" and "Princess". Genug!!

Carole Regine--I agree with you about Luke's flirtation with the Dark being somewhat anticlimactic. (Well, maybe that isn't the right word...how about brief?) He dipped his foot in the water, found it cold, and shivered, when I was expecting an all-out plunge. But then, ROTJ was George's movie, not mine and I went into the thing knowing that some of the things that I wanted to see I wouldn't. It just wasn't possible for him to please EVERYBODY! For that same reason, I don't feel that ROTJ "spoiled" things for everyone. Hooray for alternate universes, where we can type to our heart's content on what we would have liked to see, whether we liked the movie or not.

Marcia Brin: Oh, Marcia, I can't stand it when you kick me and kiss me--all in the same paragraph, too! I'm frabjous that you liked my characterization of the blond bombshell, but...!!! (Watch Jenni's lip quiver at the nasty things impinged upon Luke's black-clad bod. Lip quivers don't work, huh? How about some hair-pulling and jumping about?) Seriously, it truly makes me HURT to know that all you see in Luke from ROTJ is Darkness. Yes, he's arrogant. But Han's arrogant--and nobody seems to mind that. And Luke's arrogance--as well as Han's--is one born of love and the will to succeed. Is that really all that wrong? Ghads, I could spend the next eon fencing about this, but I don't want to make Cheree ill. Just please, give the guy the same break you would Han. Luke

is HUMAN. Give him the consideration that he will sometimes act as such. I mean, how many of us have really, REALLY enjoyed, at one time in our lives, getting ahead of the crowd who's always thought of us as the kids who won't ever get their heads out of the clouds. Han's statement to Chewie was words to that effect--"Luke can't even take care of himself, much less rescue anybody". If you'd had to hear stuff like that, even in gentle teasing, I bet you'd jump at the chance to prove yourself--and enjoy it, too! Ah, here I go again--and I promised not to get worked up. Well, it's too late--I AM WORKED UP!! You speak of the rite of passage from child to adult, which IS shown in the Saga. Just because Luke is a mature adult doesn't mean that he can't show a few flaws. ESPECIALLY with his upbringing--that of work and little show of love. Luke seems, to me, to have been an emotionally-starved person in his childhood. I'm sure Beru and Owen loved him, but it was obviously difficult for Owen to show it. He's been taught all his life to believe in only that which he can see and touch--even the man he admires and is close to--Han--tells him so. And you wonder why he talks back to the older Jedi? Or why he seems distant? A protective shell sometimes can be the only help. Now, let's find someone to crack that shell!! Ahem. I'm better now.

Now, on to SE#3. Terri's article on black and white I found very true-to-form and applicable. I'd often had those same thoughts myself, and it's nice to see that another person thinks along those lines.

Mary Urhausen: I always get the biggest kicks outta your stuff, and now I got a kick from your LoC! The SPPHSIS [the Society for the Prevention of the Promulgation of Han Solo as Intergalactic Superstud]--count me in as a charter member! I get REALLY tired of the "Han Solo as the greatest lay in the galaxy" stories. Okay, I'll bet he's pretty good--but NOBODY'S THAT great! This rumor about Corellians and their penchant to jump ANYTHING is really a scream! And I think we should the SFPOLSAGWP (The Society for Prevention of Luke Skywalker as Galaxy-Wide Poppa!). And yes, I've also had the agony of "why him--and not

ME?!" Aww, it just isn't fair! Biggs is right, I'll NEVER get to write a SW novel. Alas, I'd probably put too much mental agony, sax and violins for Lucasfilm's taste.

Luke's isolation (and this touches, a bit, what I said to Marcia above) in ROTJ is sometimes heartbreaking. He's such a bundle of moodiness, anyway--the guy desperately needs someone to tickle him until he wets his pants! Mark Hamill once mentioned that Luke was a guy who took things too seriously--and he is. The one thing that makes me want to sit down and bawl sometimes is that Luke IS alone. There is NO ONE that he can talk to on a one-to-one level. With Han--Han's not Jedi. Leia will be a student, it's presumed; I can't truly see her being a Jedi like Luke, anyway. Her path lies along a different one than Luke's. And as to the 3 stooges (who first thought up that term? It's a scream!), hey, they might always be with Luke, but they're dead. It would be great if he could find someone, man or woman, to be with and be equals with. Well, I guess it's up to us, folks. The aloof hero isn't a favorite with me. It's saddening.

Along the same train of thought--people are grouching about the lack of characterization--well, they only had two hours and, goody--that leaves more for us!!!

Carole Regine: A hatred born of love...yes. How many times have we heard of mothers lifting cars to save their children? And, because of this, IS the Dark Side a necessarily "evil" thing? I tend towards the theory that Bev Lorenstein put across, and use it in my own writing--that the Light Side and Dark Side of themselves aren't "evil" or "good". But, when there's an imbalance, whoa! Sometimes the emotions, the Dark Side's manifestation, are appropriate, sometimes the Light, with its calm is the best. Luke with the Dark dominating his destiny...that was an ambiguous statement that Yoda made. Truly, everyone has the Dark and the Light within them, and hopefully maintain a balance. Is it the balance upset that makes the "turn"? And to be dominated by the Dark--truly, Luke is governed by his emotions, but is this always bad? Luke is a "gut-

doer", as opposed to a sage, but he wouldn't be Luke otherwise. I'm a gut-doer myself, so my viewpoint towards that is naturally more understanding. (Maybe this also helps answer Martie Benedict's questions on this.)

Terri Black: TENNIS SHOE! WHERE??!!

Jean Stevenson: Uh, hate to disagree, but it was made quite clear by Ben that Luke should KILL Vader. Remember--"I can't kill my own father!" "Then the Emperor has already won."

And back to Marcia, again. And, I'll be switched--we AGREE on something! As I referred to earlier, I think the idea of Luke impregnating the galaxy IS a bit flooring (as well as hilarious!). Everything in Luke's makeup shows that he IS NOT a casual person--this would be way out of character for him, in my opinion.

Chewbubble? What does he do when it pops? Talk about a sticky mess! Or does he use Hubba-Bubba *snicker*. ((Big bubbles--no trouble!)) And in-law problems--priceless!

The article about the cancer patient really made me think. How many times in the past three years have I gotten together with friends and joked about "I refuse to die before the third part!" At least this little boy got his wish and I think it was wonderful of Lucasfilm to grant him that chance to see it.

Now, a special announcement to all non-media-fen who deign to look down their lofty noses at us.

Yes, we are a people obsessed.

This came to me for no apparent reason while I was brushing my teeth with my Luke Skywalker toothbrush (which has inspired many off-color jokes in our household!). I looked at my bathroom, which has Vader shampoo perched on the toilet (heavens, no! I don't USE it--it's saved for my collection. It does funny things to my hair, anyway...), at my closet full of costumes--and not all of them for dancing, the virtual vast quantities of cash I've spent for all this tomfoolery, and thought, "boy, am I weird!"

Ain't it great?

((Editor's Note: Not to mention the personalized license plates we have on our cars--"HAN FAN" and "LUKE FN"--we'll leave it up to the readers to guess who has which one!))