



Southern Enclave

ISSUE 51

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Research, or Ignorance is Not Bliss

Susan M. Garrett

No matter what your background, no matter what kind of submission you make, you should be ready to do research. Artists might need anatomy studies or reference photos of faces or backgrounds, writers might need facts about eighteenth century dress or 20th century weaponry, poets might need to know what *flamboyant* really means or how many lines are contained in a sonnet ... but *everybody* needs to do research at one point or another and few seem to know where the references materials are.

Why should I do research? This isn't like I'm getting graded on this or anything...

Oh, foolish, foolish mortal! You do research for two reasons — accuracy and self-protection. If someone is reading your story or poem, or looking at your artwork, you can assume that they're interested in the subject and either know something about it or are interested in learning about it. If you make mistakes in the work and the reader knows

something about the subject, they may lose respect for your work or even lose interest. If the reader wants to learn more about the subject and trusts you to give them correct information, then you fake everything, the reader will feel betrayed and will be highly unlikely to read your material again. By blatantly flaunting your ignorance, you send a clear message to your reader that you don't care and expect them not to care either. And that's assuming you make it into print in the first place. There's nothing more annoying to an editor than getting a story that obviously hasn't been researched. Why should she give consideration to printing a story when the author doesn't care enough to attempt to get a few facts straight? Don't expect your editor to do your job!

Self-protection occurs both in professional as well as amateur work. For example, a writer in *Writer's Magazine* once complained that he had been done in by an editor. In

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one of his espionage novels, he described an airport in which two Japanese men were quietly discussing business. The copy editor, a recent graduate student, decided that his writing wasn't colorful enough, so she added a number of descriptive phrases, among which was describing the conversation of the Japanese businessmen as being in the tone of "the land of the midnight sun." In one fell swoop, the graduate student had the businessmen speaking Norwegian instead of Japanese! (*The land of the midnight sun* is Norway, the *land of the rising sun* is Japan.) Luckily, the author saw the galleys and brought it to the attention of the publisher, who profusely apologized, but it was a near miss. And the error would have been picked up by a good number of people who all would have blamed the author for being such an idiot and the editor for not catching the mistake!

Mistakes happen, but protect yourself and your reader by doing a little research.

Where do I go first to research something?

That all depends on what you're researching. Most times, the library has more than enough material to answer your questions, as well as a librarian to point you in the right direction. The greatest favor you can do yourself, if you haven't done so already, is to learn your way around the card catalogue, the periodicals room (*Readers Guide to Periodical Literature* is invaluable), and the reference room — there are hundreds of indices to publications and books, bibliographies, etc.

If you're an artist in search of references, you'll find that it helps to think laterally. For example, you have to illustrate a story that takes place during Mardi Gras, and want to capture some of the atmosphere in your artwork. You say your library doesn't carry a copy of *The Great Big Color Coffee Table Book of Neat Mardi Gras Photos*? Try related subjects, like travel guides to Louisiana, or back issues of photo magazines like *Life*, or travel magazines. Ask your travel agent if he or she has any brochures on Mardi Gras trips. You get the idea.

It's also a good idea to remember that when you're working in a specific style (Art Nouveau? Art Deco?) or period (Edwardian? Egyptian?), that it's best to go to primary sources for inspiration whenever possible. For example, if you want to do something in Art Nouveau style, don't work from some recent magazine artist's diluted interpretation of someone else's imitation of the real thing. Find yourself some of the original stuff and use that as your springboard.

The following is a *brief* list of places to go for answers to a few technical questions.

anatomy— If you want to know what damage can be sustained by the human body and what the results are, check into a text on anatomy, a medical dictionary, etc. Talking to doctors and nurses isn't a bad idea, either, especially if you preface the conversation by stating that you are a writer or

artist working on material and you are doing research (you don't want a doctor to think you have sinister reason for knowing exactly how big a hole a .38 snub nosed revolver makes, now do you?). Most importantly, be courteous when dealing with these people. They are professionals and busy professionals at that, do not take up much of their time, inquire before you ask questions, and if one doctor or nurse proves too busy, ask if they can recommend someone who can help you.

Artists looking into anatomy references need go no further than local library. The photography and art section should have a few books on photographs made of people in various positions and poses just for this purpose (e.g., *The Human Figure* by Erik A. Ruby. Or check out Eadweard Muybridge's motion studies for shots of people and animals going through their paces. There are also many books designed to teach artists how to draw various bits of the body and how they all fit together. If you like to work from life, just look around ... there should be people at the library. Make sketches of how people sit or stand or move, or ask someone you know to pose for you. It works, really.

costume — There are many books on historic costume, though the further back in time you go the more gaps in specific knowledge appear. ("No, we don't know what they wore for underwear. Why do you need to know?") If you know someone who's a costumer, they can probably help a lot. The local SCA group can work wonders if you're dealing with their timeframe. Clothing within the last century or so is a cinch — check out the many available catalogue reprints, periodicals of the time, paper doll books, or even art books — what can give you a better idea of what people wore than a painting of the period?

disabilities — If you're writing about a person with a disability (even a temporary one — "A.J.'s blind, Mom! He's *blind!*"), you owe it to yourself and your audience to be a lot more accurate than the shows and movies we love generally are. Fortunately, this isn't all that difficult (check out *Disability Drama in Television and Film* by Lauri Klobas for some prime examples of what's been done wrong — and right — in the past), though there are many aspects to consider, both technical (how does A.J. keep his different-colored polo shirts straight until the bandages come off?) and in your writing itself. Avoiding cliché characters and archaic terminology (someone's only "wheelchair bound" if they've been chained to it and gagged) is a must. If you don't know someone in your life that you can consult, there are many periodicals dealing with disability-related topics ranging from medical journals to local newsletters — *Disability Rag* is a good starting source for a fan writer. Outside the library, try your local Developmental Disabilities Counsel, Hotline for the Handicapped, Easter Seals Society, or other applicable organization or service — they may have a reference library you can use, or even provide you with booklets on writing about people with

disabilities (e.g. *Portraying People with Disabilities in the Media or People First*). They can also point you in the right direction for doing more specific research.

drugs and/or illness — A trip to the drugstore is in order, along with the same stipulation about talking to doctors and/or any other professional — be polite, tell them what you are doing and ask for assistance. Most medical professionals can help you with describing the effects of certain drugs and there are now some handy paperbacks on the market about both prescription and non-prescription dosages, side-effects, etc. *The Physician's Desk Reference* (PDR) is also handy in this regard, as well as for listing the symptoms and treatment of various illnesses, and should be available in most libraries.

If you're looking specifically for poisons or historical information, there are a number of historical medical books that can assist you, including books on plant folklore and herbs. Also consider looking into books on historical crimes.

espionage — Believe it or not, books do exist that do nothing but trace the histories of espionage agencies, going into great detail about how agencies operate, terminology, and who should be afraid of whom and why. Pay special attention to any reference section, as well as the biography section (many a well-known or unknown spy has published a memoir), and be prepared to breeze through a few espionage novels for atmosphere and a feel for dirty tricks.

geography and/or traveling — Small problems such as how long a flight takes from X to Y can be handled by a quick call to your travel agent. Larger problems such as what the people wear, what language they speak, and how they feel about certain things involves a bit more research. Thankfully, most countries have tourist bureaus which are more than happy to send you pamphlets and brochures and answer questions. If you're interested in the historical aspect, mention it, but also keep an eye out for museums, travel guides, and epic films.

historical characters — If you're writing about a real person from history in a fictional context, it's not unlikely that you'll need to play fast and loose with a few aspects of that person's life. That's acceptable if it's nothing too outrageous. But make sure that you know the facts before you start fictionalizing. Biographies are best to start, of course, but don't forget histories of the period in question, contemporary magazines, etc. Primary source material is always helpful — try to find out if your subject has any letters published, voice recordings available, or appears on film anywhere. If the person is related to your local area, a trip to the historical society will yield results.

law — It is possible to understand the law without being a lawyer, although you might want to speak to one for safety's sake. For technical terms, refer to a law dictionary, for minor court procedures go to one of the current paperback "law for the layman" books on the shelves (which

describes everything from small claims court to juvenile status to criminal prosecution). Also be prepared to delve into the rules and regulations of other agencies, such as insurance companies, unions, etc., if it becomes appropriate.

paranormal — If you're interested in the real stuff, there are a number of organizations around that deal with everything from ghosts to UFOs to Bigfoot. Check your local library magazines section, as well as the section on paranormal and/or religious material and you'll probably find what you need. The reference section should hold at least one encyclopedia on the supernatural. If you're after information on monsters and magic, you'll want to check out the classic literary works and the commentary on them, along with the mythology/folklore/religion section of your library. One caveat — one person's folklore is often another person's religion, and as such must be treated with respect. For example, don't give a totem pole to a Native American tribe that doesn't use them, or try to fake your way through a ritual that may or may not exist simply for the convenience of your story. It's ... well, it's a damn stupid thing to do.

police procedure — Depending on the time period and the country you're dealing with, police procedure could involve the intricacies of Miranda rights or a nightstick to the skull. Modern police procedures can be discussed with police officers or looked up in manuals. Foreign police procedure is a bit trickier, but even foreign governments have police manuals and/or people to talk to. Check out the plethora of non-fiction books concerning various types of police investigation and they may very well straighten out some of your problems.

sex — Yes, you already know all about it. But breaking a leg — even breaking it five or six times a week — doesn't necessarily make you a bone specialist. Otherwise there wouldn't be so many "adult" stories featuring bizarre technical blunders, physical impossibilities, or scenes where the author glosses over crucial moments because he or she obviously has no idea what's actually taking place. Reading other people's adult stories isn't the best way to go about researching the stuff — for example, if you're a young heterosexual female who writes slash, what do you think happens when you get your facts from stories written by other young heterosexual females who in turn got their information from ... you get the picture. The library — or bookstore if you live in a town where what goes on the library shelves is kept under control "for your own good" — is the place to go. (Caveat: avoid out and out pornography, which isn't usually at home to Mr. Realism — you've got plenty of imagination of your own, right? — and faddy stuff like *The G-Spot Coloring Book* or *The Women's Astrological Sex and Cooking Journal — A Book of Days*).

sports and hobbies — If you need to know something about golf, check out the golf pro at a local country club. The same goes for most sports — swimmers know about swimming, baseball fans seem to remember entire team

rosters for years, and Olympic fans can tell you who won what medal when. Most of this information can also be found in books and encyclopedias, but a person might give you a bit more feel for the topic than a book will.

technical— Need to know how an automobile engine works, what the latest development is in laser optics, or how many tiles cover a space shuttle? Check scientific magazines and the hard science section of the library. You'd be surprised at the information available to you from various people — car mechanics, AT&T, and NASA are more than willing to answer questions than you'd think they'd be.

Conclusion

Reference materials may include dictionaries, encyclopedias, biographies, histories, fiction (mystery, espionage, science fiction, fantasy, etc.), magazine or

newspaper clippings, documentaries, movies, museum and travel guides, and may involve interviews with medical professionals, lawyers, travel agents, mechanics, sports pros or fans, teachers, students, government agencies, embassies, travel bureaus, etc. This isn't to say that you'll need to speak with every one of these people or have to consult every one of those types of books when you do research — what you do will depend upon the amount of information you need and how you plan to use it. Facts, figures, and quirky details are best found in books, but only someone who's been in Barcelona in the summer can tell you about the heat, or someone who works for or with abused women can begin to tell you about the frustrations and lack of legal options. Be willing to talk to people and do a little research and your work will improve dramatically.

The Day I met Gary Kurtz

Gerald Crotty

On the 14th of June 1998, I went to Empire Day IX in Cheshunt, England. Empire Day is a one day SW event. There are usually 6-8 guests from the films, a dealer's room, props display, video room, etc. There's a Q&A session, autograph signing, craft competition, and auction.

I'd been to the first few Empire Days and met Jeremy Bulloch, Dave Prowse, Michael Sheard, Warwick Davis, Caroline Blakiston, Kenny Baker, Peter Diamond, Declan Mulholland, etc. But by the 6th one, it was mostly the same guests turning up again and again, so I'd given the last few events a miss. After all, how many times do I need to hear Dave Prowse say, "They should have used my voice"?

So, why did I decide to go to IX? Simple: Gary Kurtz was going. Yes, Gary Kurtz. Yes, the producer of SW and TESB.

Actually, he had turned up at another con the previous year, so I knew it wasn't mad fantasy on the organizer's part.

So I went down to the venue. We looked at the props and the junk in the dealer's room which I can't afford and then we sat down for the Q&A. Now my friends know I'm a Kurtz fan 'cos I'm always complaining about how Lucasfilm ignores his contributions.

So, come 12 noon and the guests are introduced and brought on stage for the Q&A. They introduce Shelagh

Fraser, Warwick Davis, Declan Mulholland, Stuart and Kay Freeborn, Kenny Baker, and Gary Kurtz. He looks a little older, his hair is thinning but in good health. It's his composure that's the most obvious thing. He's got this zen-like quality about him.

I asked him what he thought about the Special Editions. He said he didn't really agree with them, that the CGI Jabba was mainly a gimmick to get publicity and that they knew the scene was redundant back in 1977 which is why Greedo was given the plot exposition Jabba would have given. He also said he didn't like the way some of the re-editing messed up the music cues and rhythm. He also talked about how a film is of its time and how filmmakers do their best but there comes a point when the film has to be finished and left alone.

However, he did add that the best thing to come out of it all is that the films are in the theaters again where they should be seen.

I also asked him about the Greedo scene. George Lucas had said that Greedo was always meant to shoot first. Kurtz was baffled by this. He said Han was always meant to shoot first and the new scene is confusing. He couldn't remember any intention by Lucas in 1977 to have Greedo shoot first.

An audience member asked the panel what their favorite



Gary Kurtz and Gerald Crotty

SW scene was. Kurtz said he didn't have a particular favorite scene but he remembered when he saw the scene where Luke says "I'm not afraid" and Yoda says "You will be ... you will be!" He said that that scene proved Yoda worked as a dramatic character, something they'd really worried about. (Is this guy smart or what?)

After the Q&A, there was a signing session. Now I don't usually bother with these things. I'm just not really interested in standing in line for an autograph. But I decided to get Kurtz' if only because it would afford me the opportunity of asking him another question or two.

While I was in the queue, a guy asked me who he was! I couldn't believe it. I felt like saying, "He's Gary Kurtz,

the producer, you @#\$% moron!" but instead I just politely answered him. And then I looked across at the queue for Warwick Davis and noticed it was 5 times as long. I couldn't help feeling some contempt for those types of fans who know how much a Yak Face is worth and get all excited about having their copy of "Battle for Endor" signed, but don't know who Gary Kurtz is. Hell, some of them think Rick McCallum produced SW!

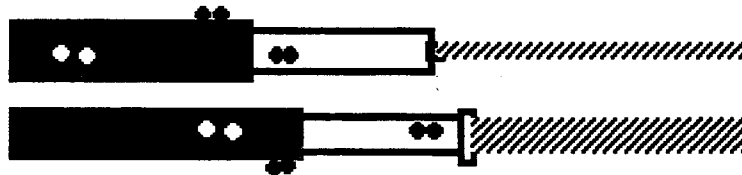
So, I got his autograph and I asked him an awkward question — why hadn't we seen him on TV during all the publicity for the Special Editions? He said that he was out of the country at the time. He paused and then told me that he didn't get on very well with Lucasfilm at the moment. But he added quickly that he got on okay with George, just not Lucasfilm.

I also asked him if he was still working on movies and he said he had several projects on the go. And then I asked if I could have my picture taken with him. I'm just a geek like everyone else!

The thing about Gary Kurtz is that he's so polite and honest, if I were him, I'd be rather bitter about not receiving the recognition and rewards he undoubtedly deserves. But there isn't a trace of any resentment about him, and he always answers questions truthfully. He doesn't try and represent anyone but himself. He's also clearly very intelligent but without any egotism.

Very un-Hollywood.

I have to say it — he's the Jedi Master.



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Deadline for #52 – February 1, 1999. *Submissions received later than seven (7) days after deadline will not be published in the current issue.*

BALLANTINE EXPLORES A NEW GALAXY WITH WORLD ENGLISH RIGHTS TO A COMPREHENSIVE STAR WARS

New Agreement Consolidates Current Star Wars Book Properties With New Publications Tied to Next 3 Star Wars Films

NEW YORK, Oct. 15 /PRNewswire/ -- The Ballantine Publishing Group has just acquired rights to a sweeping program of future Star Wars fiction and nonfiction titles, it was announced today by Linda Grey, President of the Group. Ballantine, a division of Random House Inc., the world's largest English-language general trade book publisher has been publishing the best selling novelizations of the first three Star Wars films for over 20 years.

"Star Wars has become the most successful franchise in the entertainment industry," said Ms. Grey, "and we're excited to have an opportunity to play such a key role in the publishing that will accompany the new Star Wars movies. Along with our bestselling Star Wars backlist, publishing all of the new adult fiction and nonfiction well into the next millennium will introduce the magic of Star Wars to a whole new generation of readers."

"We're delighted to bring our complete Star Wars adult publishing program under one roof said Howard Roffman, Vice President of Licensing for Lucasfilm, Ltd. "It will create an unprecedented opportunity for a coordinated program that will take Star Wars publishing to its highest level and bring exciting new books to our fans the world over."

The first of the three new Star Wars films has just completed the first phase of principal photography and is expected to be released in May 1999.

Under the new licensing agreement, Ballantine, through its Del Rey imprint, will publish novelizations of the three new Star Wars films, which are prequels to the original Star Wars Trilogy, Star Wars: A New Hope, The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi. In addition, they will publish all the nonfiction books based on the new trilogy of films, and spin-off novels set in the periods of both the classic films and the new prequel trilogy. . . .

Ballantine's sister Random House Inc. companies abroad will publish the three new Star Wars novelizations, the classic Star Wars spin-off novels, and new novels relating to the upcoming films throughout the English-speaking world. The companies include Random House UK, Random House Australia, Random House New Zealand, Random House South Africa, and in Canada, Ballantine Books. The Star Wars fiction will also be available throughout the English-speaking world in audio format from Random House Audio Publishing.

The nonfiction Star Wars projects, including illustrated and art books, guides to the various aspects of the Star Wars universe, illustrated scripts and other informative and entertaining companions to the Star Wars experience will be published by Ballantine in the United States and Canada.

A NOTE FROM PAT GRANT

I'm planning to do up a special ad section to be ready by next May. Anyone who is interested can send me an ad listing that is 2-1/2" wide and 2" tall in size, along with a reduced clear copy of a cover from your most recent publication (zine, newsletter, letterzine...) to go with it. Most publications put artwork on the cover and artwork sells! Again, either send a clear *reduced* copy (must fit in the 2-1/2" x 2" size area with your text!), or send it scanned onto MacIntosh disk as a .TIF file. You may send in an ad for each publication you want listed. Clubs and Services are also welcome to submit same size ads. NOTE: This will be free advertising to you!!! All we ask in return is equal space in your publication if you offer advertising space. Also ... I'd like you to send me a short "bio" on your organization. This would include such things as when you started, how big is your membership, what publications you produce, and anything else you can think of. I plan to start doing a "spotlight" page each issue on one of our advertisers. This, of course, would be free advertising. Send your ads to:

Pat Grant
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And let me know if you'd like a master copy of this ad spread to include in your next publication after May 1999.

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STAR WARS/FANNISH WEBSITES...

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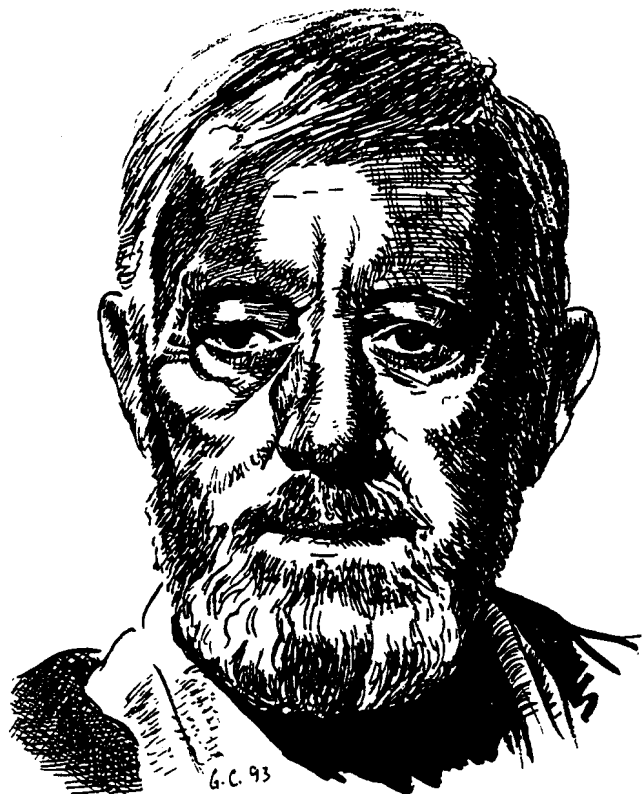
THE MOONS OF YAVIN has been running in the U.K. since 1984 and produced two club-related magazines, *Telesponder*, which is packed full of club info, SW news, and views and some of the best artwork around, and *Galaxy Travellers*, which includes SW fiction, both from the club members and other SW fans. The Moons of Yavin is for the active fan, for those whose views, artwork, reviews and fandom express their love for their interest in SW. The Moons of Yavin also caters to the younger SW fan, with its own Junior Section. For more details on the club, write to:
Jamie Spracklen
58 Seymour Road
Hadleigh, Benfleet
Essex, SS7 2HL, U.K.

UPCOMING CONVENTION INFO...

Mark down March 27-28, 1999, if you're within travelling distance of Dallas for the Plano SciFi Expo and Toy Show (Plano is a suburb of Dallas). Guest stars will be Jeri "Seven of Nine" Ryan and Jonathan "Hugh Borg" de Arco. Special guest is scheduled to be Billy Dee Williams (contract pending but expected to be returned any day now).

And if you're not going to make MediaWest next year and/or are able to make it to Dallas May 21-23, don't miss the next Plano SciFi Expo and Toy Show. Because of the new SW movie opening that week, this one will be a SW blowout with the following guest stars — Dave Prowse, Peter Mayhew, Jeremy Bullock, Warwick Davis and a host of other SW guests!

Randy and I will be have a booth at both shows! Come see us! Then we'll see you at MWC the next weekend!!!
Star Wars Rules!!!



SINCERE SYMPATHY TO ...

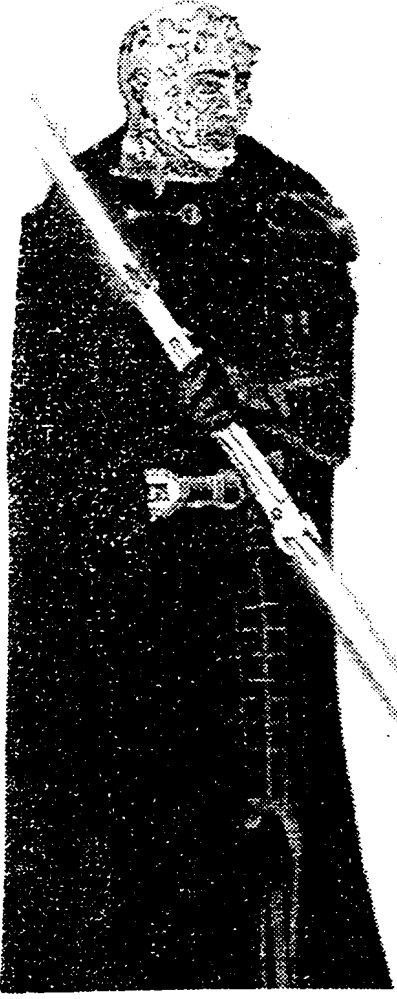
Wanda Lybarger who lost her mother in early November.

Wanda expresses her thanks to everyone who sent cards, letters, flowers or phone calls. She will answer as many as possible but is unable to answer all of them. She does want everyone to know that she truly appreciates the outpouring of love and care that her friends in fandom have sent her way.

SOUTHERN ENCLAVE MEMBER PROFILES...

- Name:** Tina Inge Bentrup
Address: 5325 Browns Gap Road
Knoxville, TN 37918
Phone: (423) 922-5862
Occupation: Library Specialist (Interlibrary Loan)
Education: B.A. (English), Univ. of Tennessee
Personal: Married since 1974 to Dan Bentrup; no children besides the 2 of us!
- Years in Fandom:**
Since 1988, but saw SW in 1977
- Fannish Activities:**
Southern Enclave, MediaWest since 1991, contributor to *A Tremor in the Force* (stories and cartoons)
- Fannish Activities besides SW:**
Gilbert & Sullivan fan since 1950's!
- Interests Outside Fandom:**
Choral singing, playing recorder, hiking in the Smoky Mountains, playing ping-pong, writing, drawing cartoons
- How did you get into fandom:**
An ad in *Starlog* led me to *Pop Stand Express* which led me to Kathy Agel, who led me to Cheree
- Best thing that's ever happened to you in fandom:**
First appearance of B.J. (Blue Jawa) at MWC in 1991. Winning the Star Award for Blue Jawa story and cartoons. Attending MWC.

STAR WARS



Can the Upcoming Film Satisfy the Universe of Lucas Fanatics?

By MICHAEL COLTON
Washington Post Staff Writer

PHOTOS FROM THE FORCE NET

Eager for any information on the upcoming "Star Wars" prequel, fans have substituted imagination for fact and drawn creatures like Watto, top, and Darth Maul, above.



Ewan McGregor plays a young Obi-Wan in the still-untitled Episode 1 of the new trilogy, but this conception of his appearance is strictly a fan's guess.

May 21, 1999.

It's nine months away, but for millions of people, the date already has mystic, even cosmic significance. Dreams will be realized, legends reborn. "A defining moment in the history of our culture," reads one Web site, which counts down the days, hours, minutes and seconds until May 21.

On that day we will experience "The Fight for Freedom." Or "Battle of the Force" or "Guardians of the Republic." Or "Quest for Hope," "Hope for the Future" or "Balance of the Force."

For all we know, May 21 will bring "Saving Private Skywalker," or "National Lampoon's Jedi Journey"—it doesn't really matter what the title is because the movie will be the new "Star Wars" film, now known as "the prequel" or "Episode 1" until George Lucas reveals something better.

On May 21, movie theaters will be more crowded than the Mos Eisley cantina, and if you know what that means, you're probably one of the millions of people who

are feverishly anticipating and speculating about this film on the Web, in magazines, at the National Air and Space Museum's "Star Wars" exhibit. Ever since Lucas announced in 1993 that he was finally going to fulfill his promise to deliver three new films set before his famous trilogy—"Star Wars" (1977), "The Empire Strikes

Back" (1980) and "Return of the Jedi" (1983) were, respectively, Episodes 4, 5 and 6—the interest in the production has been unprecedented.

"This movie has more riding on it for more people than any movie in history," says Michael Schur, 22, a writer for "Saturday Night Live" and a rabid "Star Wars" fan.

Schur's not referring to the film's producers, who are assured of making back far more than the film's \$115 million budget. The phenomenal success of last year's re-release of the trilogy proves that audiences are still hungry for droids and Wookiees. The three films took in a combined \$250 million domestically in 1997, pushing their cumulative domestic gross over \$1 billion. Plus, word of mouth for the prequel has already produced a voluminous amount of free publicity—for instance, this article.

No, Schur is talking about the fans, the generation that grew up in the "Star Wars" universe acting out Han Solo fantasies during recess and wait-

Droid Anticipation: Awaiting the Prequel

ing for another chapter. "Star Wars" was a childhood fixation that they never wanted to outgrow. The themes and characters still resonate, and all the comic books, novels and CD-ROMs that expand the "Star Wars" universe pale compared with a new episode from Lucas, who has not directed a movie since the original "Star Wars."

"Expectations are impossibly high, perhaps too high to be met," says Schur. "If the movie isn't good and doesn't satisfy its fans, it'll basically be the most crushing disappointment in film history."

Fans have devoted thousands of Web sites to "Star Wars," many of them trying to penetrate the strict secrecy surrounding the prequel's production and piece together what the new film will look and sound like. They flocked to theaters to see "The X-Files" and "Doctor Dolittle" because there were rumors that 20th Century Fox would attach a "Star Wars" trailer to these Fox movies. They purchase every "Star Wars" toy on the market. They download the parody, "Troops," which re-imagines "Star Wars" by way of "Cops," and search in vain for the hard-to-find embarrassment "The Star Wars Holiday Special," which aired on television in 1978 and featured the original actors, disco and Bea Arthur. ("One

of the most horrible atrocities committed by mankind," says Brian Linder, 22, of Columbia, S.C., who's seen a bootleg copy.)

"Star Wars" fans are not just boys in their twenties. There are women, too, and younger devotees who first saw the original films on video or in the theater last year. Noah Friedman, an 8-year-old from Potomac, follows the prequel gossip on the Web. When he saw the trilogy on screen last year, he already knew all the words from watching them at home. The third-grade critic is ready to make a prediction on the new film: "It's going to be good no matter what, probably, because George Lucas is a very, very good director."

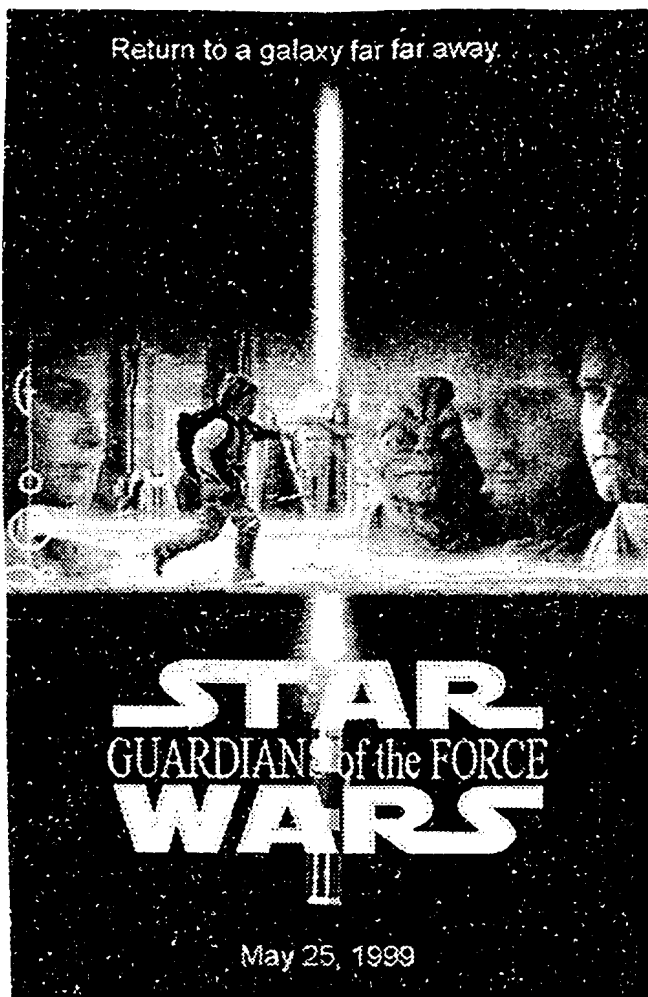
And please, do not mistake them for Trekkies. Though there are overlaps between the two groups, "Star Wars" fans are not necessarily "Star Trek" junkies. "Star Trek" fans think 'Star Wars' fans are pretentious, and 'Star Wars' fans think 'Star Trek' fans are geeks," says Kevin Murphy, 23, a research assistant for political spinner James Carville. Last Christmas, Carville and wife Mary Matalin acknowledged Murphy's passion and gave him an R2D2 telephone.

(For the record, The Washington Post declares that "Star Wars" fans are cooler. Trekkies, please set your phasers on stun.)

Filming for the prequel recently wrapped up at a studio in England, a castle in Italy and the Tunisian desert. Cast and crew signed standard confidentiality agreements, and information is hard to come by. But to counter the leaks, Lucasfilm has released certain facts on its official Web site, www.starwars.com.

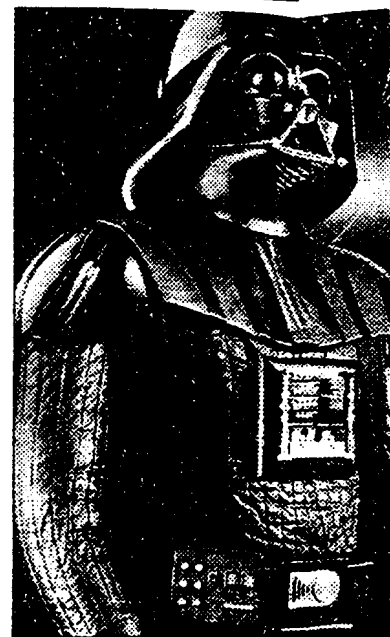
Here is what we know to be true: Luke and Leia's future mother (played by Natalie Portman, who recently portrayed Anne Frank on Broadway) is a queen on a distant planet. The planet gets invaded by bad guys, and Jedi knights come to her rescue. Among the heroes are Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor from "Trainspotting") and a young Anakin Skywalker (Jake Lloyd from "Jingle All the Way"), who goes on to become Luke and Leia's father and ultimately Darth Vader. Liam Neeson's in the movie, as are Samuel L. Jackson and Yoda.

We also know—and this comes straight from Entertainment Weekly, which got a confirmation from the DreamWorks SKG studio—that Lucas chum Steven Spielberg saw foot-



PHOTOS BY ERIC LONG AND MARK AVINO—SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

At left, an unofficial Web site. Yoda, above, and Darth Vader, right, are in their formative years in the prequel.



FILE PHOTO/BY DARREN MICHAELS—MIRAMAX FILMS

Samuel L. Jackson had few answers to offer when asked about the upcoming movie.

age of the film and said, "Oh my God!"

We know there will be alien worlds (Tatooine, Coruscant) and droids. We know it will have very cool effects.

Apart from this, we don't know very much. But this hasn't stopped Web sites like *theforce.net* and *jedi-net.com* from investigating.

"Our information comes from all over the globe," says Scott Chitwood, a 25-year-old civil engineer in Houston who co-founded *theforce.net*. Crew members and extras have leaked details from the set that Chitwood's 10-person volunteer staff tries to confirm. He's even heard from fans who trekked to Tunisia to retrieve props as souvenirs. As on other sites, information is color-coded according to its degree of reliability.

The cast members themselves provide little help. When Samuel L. Jackson hosted "Saturday Night

Live" last season, Schur and other writers peppered him with "Star Wars" questions. But Jackson, who told them he had been given only the few script pages that involved his character, had no answers.

Some of the rumors floating on the Web sound plausible: that light-sabers will be double-sided and handled like martial-arts weapons, that clon-

ing will figure prominently in the plot, that Jabba the Hutt will return.

Others have already been disproved by Lucasfilm: that 40 percent of the film was out of focus and had to be re-shot, that Natalie Portman filmed a nude scene.

Lucasfilm spokeswoman Lynne Hale says Lucas has not paid much attention to the fan furor. "He doesn't have a lot of time to read the sites," she says. "He's working on the editing and special effects for Episode 1, and writing Episode 2." (Episodes 2 and 3, which will probably focus on the romance between Anakin and the

queen, and Anakin's journey to the Dark Side, will premiere sometime after 2001.)

If that's the case, Lucas has not seen the "virtual edition" of his movie, created by Roderick Vonhogen, who identifies himself as a 30-year-old Dutch priest. Vonhogen relied on rumors of the plot to create 170 digital images in a storyboard format that he hopes approximates the actual film. "It's like a big puzzle, and I'm looking forward to seeing how many pieces I managed to fit in the right place," Vonhogen wrote in an e-mail from the Netherlands.

Some of the rumors about the new film are troubling for die-hard fans—such as the one about Jar-Jar Binks, rumored to be a cute, pudgy three-

eyed alien. Anything "cute" sounds too much like the Ewoks, the furry creatures from "Return of the Jedi" that many fans viewed as an unwanted intrusion of crass commercialism.

However, the Ewoks did help attract a certain group of fans. "Ewoks are probably responsible for more young girls becoming interested in 'Star Wars' than anything else," says Amy Pronovost, a 23-year-old artist from Thunder Bay, Ontario. Pronovost believes female "Star Wars" fans are less vocal because science fiction is perceived as a male province. "I'm surprised there aren't more female fans, because of the fantasy element, the medieval myths. I think of 'Star Wars' more as science fantasy than science fiction."

Pronovost belongs to the don't-ask-don't-tell subset of fandom, those who are trying to avoid the hype and gossip. "I want to be completely blown away," she says.

Mike Stone, 25, an actor in New York, has instructed his friends to avoid discussing prequel rumors in his presence. "When I was in the fourth grade, my sister told me that Luke and Leia were twins before I saw 'Return of the Jedi' and that really ruined it," he says. "When my butt is sitting in that seat [for the movie] I want to be surprised by virtually everything in front of me."

Stone says he will, however, allow himself to watch the film's trailer, which is expected to debut around the holidays. No one knows which film it will be affixed to. The latest "Star Trek" film is a possibility, as is DreamWorks' animated movie "The Prince of Egypt."

Some people, like Bleu, a 29-year-old clothing designer in New York who goes by one name, are more interested in the film's merchandising. "Getting to Toys R Us and fighting with the little kids for the action figures—now that's gonna be a lot harder than it is to see the movie," says Bleu, whose office is a "small museum" containing over 2,000 "Star Wars" toys. "God forbid McDonald's decides to do a tie-in with it, and I have to go buy Happy Meals."

And where will all these fans be on May 21, 1999?

Chitwood says he'll see the movie at a science fiction convention in Dallas. Pronovost will probably be at the one theater in Thunder Bay that has Lucas's patented THX-enhanced sound system. Some staffers from *theforce.net* plan to meet in Los Angeles. Stone's rear end will be at the Ziegfeld in New York.

And he'll be praying: "I just hope to God it doesn't suck."



A couple of swingers: Carrie Fisher & Mark Hamill in RETURN OF THE JEDI. Fisher denies she's participating, as screenwriter, in George Lucas' STAR WARS prequels.



**STAR
WARS**

he wait, or part of it, is over. On Sept. 25, Lucasfilm at long last answered one of the more profound questions about the *Star Wars* prequel due next spring: Just what is it going to be called? The title, announced on the official website, will be, drumroll, please, *Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace*. A few fans reacted to the news like a Wookiee with a hair ball. "That's a pretty strange title there George," groused one Web devotee. "It's gonna take some time to get used to this one." Others were on board: "[I]t sounds okay to me, and far better than a lot of the rumored ones," said another. And never mind that ILM will likely have to conjure up some special effect to get the most multisyllabic title since *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill, But Came Down a Mountain* onto theater marquees. But is the title written in stone? Remember, Lucas originally announced that 1983's *Return of the Jedi* would be called *Revenge of the Jedi*. Don't get your hopes up, says Lucasfilm's Lynne Hale. "Phantom Menace," she confirms, "is the title." Too bad. We were pulling for *Jabba Gump*. —Daniel Fierman

● Despite previously published rumors to the contrary, actress/screenwriter Carrie Fisher enlightened me that she is *not* working on a rewrite of George Lucas' script, STAR WARS: EPISODE I. Best known for her role as Princess Leia in the original STAR WARS trilogy, Fisher is currently one of the highest paid script doctors in Hollywood. She did not, however, take her red pen to Lucas' latest saga. "As his friend, I read it, but I did not sit and tinker with it," she says. "I wouldn't say if I did, because he's not [signatory to] the [Writers] Guild [and] they'd come after me." In a recent interview with *FF*, Fisher discussed her STAR WARS character, her relationships with Lucas and Steven Spielberg, and the difficulties of being an ambitious career woman in male-dominated Tinseltown. Look for my cover story on this intelligent and talented woman in an upcoming ish.

Obi-Wan Kenobi wins again

Star Wars coins a new fortune for Sir Alec

by CATHERINE MILNER
and CHRIS OLIVER WILSON

SIR ALEC GUINNESS has said he is "very pleased" about a multi-million-pound windfall he will receive from the successful re-release of the *Star Wars* — 20 years after he acted the role of the wise Jedi knight, Obi-Wan Kenobi, in the smash-hit film.

Sir Alec, 82, confirmed to *The Sunday Telegraph* that, by taking a percentage rather than a flat fee, he is still raking in stupendous royalties from a movie first released in 1977.

The deal has assumed legendary status in Hollywood and has been used as a blueprint by top-earning stars. But it was a gamble at the time, as few predicted *Star Wars* would prove such a box-office winner.

Sir Alec's canniness has made him one of the highest-paid British actors. But he discounted industry gossip that the re-release has clinched him the highest fee to have been paid for a single movie.

"Some have said that I have already earned £120 million — divide that by 20 and you might be nearer the mark," Sir Alec said. "But the sums keep changing."

He said the re-release of the film, which has already taken £31 million gross in America, would earn him more money. *Star Wars* will be re-released in Britain on March 21.

"I still have a contract which says that I earn a percentage cut from the film and, of course, I'm very pleased about it," Sir Alec

said, joking that he was incapable of acting nowadays. One of Britain's most distinguished actors, he retired in 1995 after 60 years of stage and screen roles.

His agent at the time of *Star Wars*, Dennis van Thal, is understood to have struck a deal in which Sir Alec would receive two per cent of the gross royalties paid to the director, George Lucas. The director received a fifth of the box-office takings. *Star Wars* has grossed \$560 million (£373 million) worldwide.

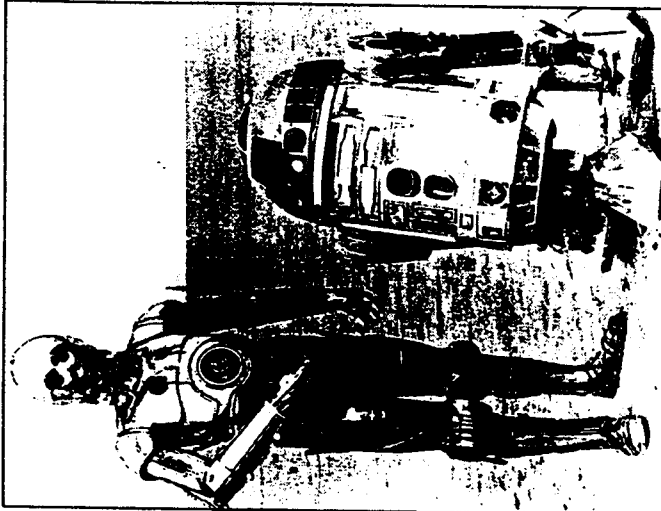
Sir Alec would also have received royalties for the video release and the film's two sequels, in which his character returned in spiritual form.

His role as Obi-Wan Kenobi in *Star Wars*, and in the sequels — *The Empire Strikes Back*, released in 1980, and *Return of the Jedi* which followed in 1984 — will have earned him more than his combined earnings from his 40 other film roles. These include *Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), for which he won an Oscar.

Last week Sir Alec said he did not like discussing his income from the films. "If I tell you more, I'll end up having to open 100 or more begging letters a day."

Another to benefit from the then-unconventional deal on payment has been Kenny Baker, the 3ft 8in dwarf who played the robot R2D2.

"My cut for *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* was less than one per cent," he said. "But when you're talking about millions and millions



Cut above the rest: Kenneth Baker, who played the robot R2D2, left, in the film *Star Wars* starring Alec Guinness, right, as the Jedi knight. Both are still reaping the benefits of a deal seen as a blueprint by the rest of Hollywood

of dollars, it gets very lucrative. I haven't got a clue how much I made from it. I haven't bothered to count it all up, but I did very well out of it, and bought a house and a Mercedes."

Mr Baker, 62, added: "For the first movie only Alec Guinness and the Americans were on small percentages, not the British. "But they made so much money they were almost embarrassed into giving all the English guys percentages on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*."

Many of the technicians who worked on *Star Wars* at Elstree studios in Hertfordshire were offered percentages but turned them down. It was a decision they would come to regret. When it

George Lucas made the first film, few people had an inkling of its future success. His script, for which he was paid £15,000, was turned down by two studios before Twentieth Century Fox agreed to finance it.

Although the heroic exploits of Luke, Han, Leia and Obi-Wan Kenobi instantly captured the imagination of millions, Lucas himself was "really disappointed", feeling that shortage of cash meant the film did not live up to anything like its full potential.

Some of the technicians working on the film seemed to agree. "It's nothing but comic-book dialogue and bad acting," said one. The critics were equally caustic, calling it "trashy".

"pseudo-religious puff" and "sterile and chilly... for people raised on junk food".

Fox was delighted to accept Lucas's offer to swap his director's fee of £250,000 for the serialisation and licensing rights. This was to prove to be the basis of his £1.2 billion fortune.

Mr Baker, who has worked mostly with a one-man cabaret act and in pantomimes since *Star Wars*, is one hoping it makes mountains of gold. "I'm just a working actor and I need to make hay while the sun shines. If I make lots and lots of money over the next few years, I will probably retire."

He added: "We all did very well out of it, and we're all very grateful to George Lucas."

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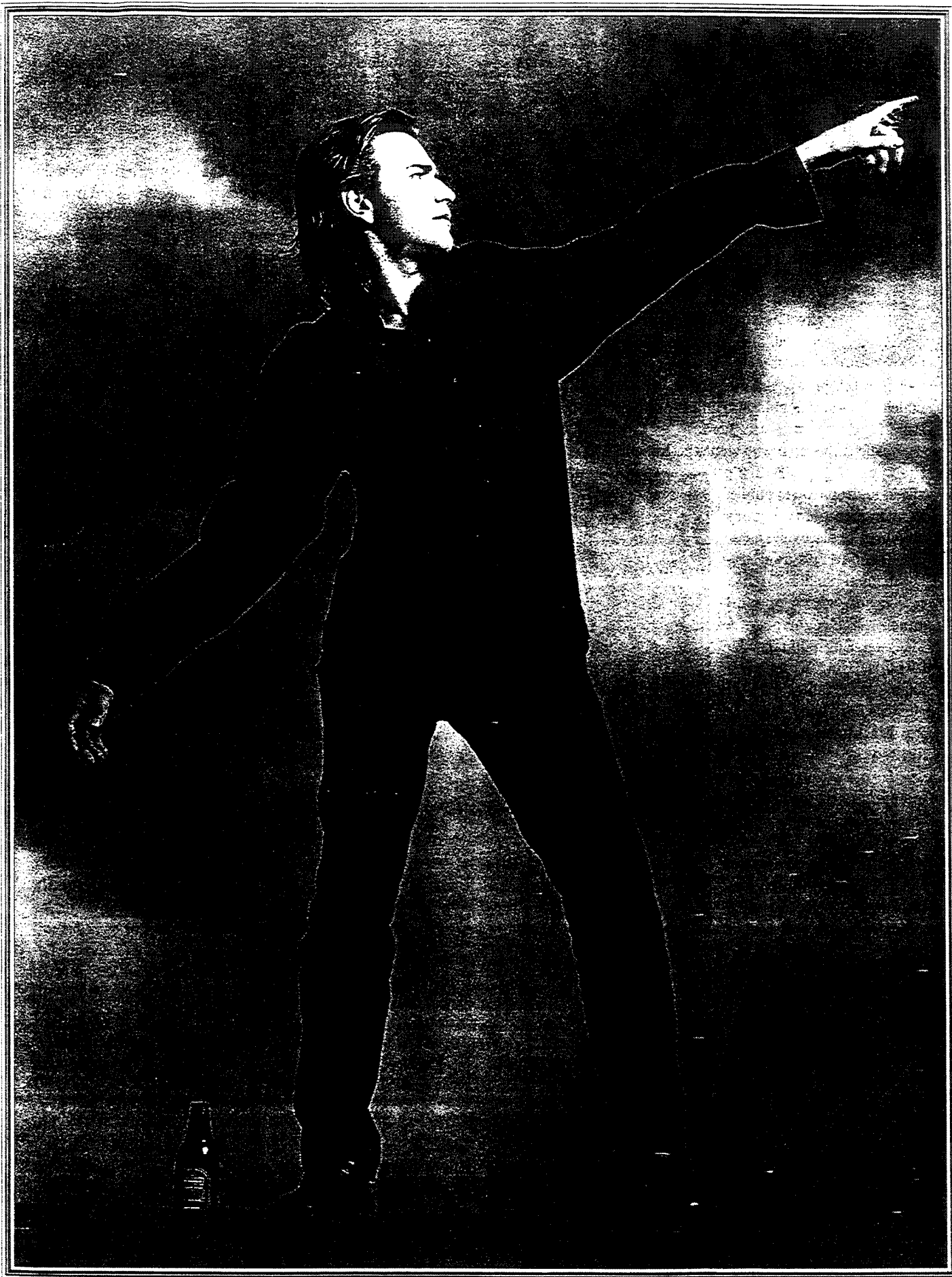
THAT TO BE WAS

BY BENJAMIN SVETKEY

"WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD TO say," Ewan McGregor announces after chugging down his third beer, "is that we're in negotiations. But the truth is, I want to do it, they want me to do it, so I'm doing it." ★ The "it" in question, of course, is only the role of a lifetime, playing the most beloved Jedi master ever to tangle with the Dark Side. As the whole world is about to learn, McGregor, 26,

has been signed to star as the young Obi-Wan Kenobi in the new *Star Wars* prequels, a bit of casting news that instantly makes him the biggest thing out of Scotland since argyle socks, or at least since Sean Connery. ★ "Actually," says the scruffily charming actor in his bristly Highland burr, "I really want to play Princess Leia. Stick some big pastries on my head. Now, *that* would be interesting."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NIGEL PARRY



LAST YEAR, MCGREGOR CREATED A HUGE splash—literally—by chasing an opium suppository down a toilet bowl in the indie hit *Trainspotting*. That harrowing performance won him an Actor of the Year award from the London Film Critics Circle and made him one of the hottest young thespians in the realm (see page 33 for his competition). Next to those battling brothers from Oasis, he's become the biggest pop god in England, a national antihero for the post-punk-but-still-pissed-off generation. And yet, despite *Trainspotting's* respectable run in the U.S. (it earned \$16 million) and his role opposite Gwyneth Paltrow in the even more respectable *Emma* (\$22 million), most Americans haven't a clue who he is—even if they did happen to catch his special guest spot on *ER* last February, in which he held Julianna Margulies hostage in a convenience store for the show's entire hour.

So who is this man who would be Kenobi? For starters, he's the type of guy who isn't afraid to drop trou in public, as American moviegoers are about to discover. In Peter Greenaway's new art-house mind-bender *The Pillow Book*, which opened June 6, McGregor plays a bisexual Englishman who lets his Hong Kong girlfriend draw calligraphy all over his bare body—including his unsheathed, um, lightsaber. "Being naked was far more worrisome for everyone else on the set than it was for me," he reports. "I actually enjoyed it, the truth be told. There was something incredibly powerful about it. Usually you'd get arrested for that sort of thing, but I got paid."

This month, American audiences can also see McGregor—fully clothed—in *Brassed Off*, a small-but-scrappy English film about a doomed mining town. In the fall, he'll be costarring with Nick Nolte and Patricia Arquette in *Nightwatch*, his first American thriller, in which he'll play a morgue attendant who gets mixed up in a murder. He'll also turn up as a hapless janitor who kidnaps Cameron Diaz in *A Life Less Ordinary*, a romantic comedy by the same writer-director-producer team that made *Trainspotting*. And he's just finished shooting Todd Haynes' *Velvet Goldmine*, a David Bowie-Iggy Pop-inspired

love story set in the glam-rock '70s, due out next year.

It's an eclectic slate of projects, with the emphasis on smart, offbeat independent films—in other words, the sort of movies that don't spin off many toy tie-ins. "When I met with agents in L.A., they would tell me you had to do two movies for yourself and then two for the business," he says. "And I thought, 'F--- off. No, you don't. You do every film because you want to do good work. Because you're interested in making good movies and working with good people.' To do a crappy event movie for a lot of money, like *Independence Day*—I would never taint my soul with that crap."

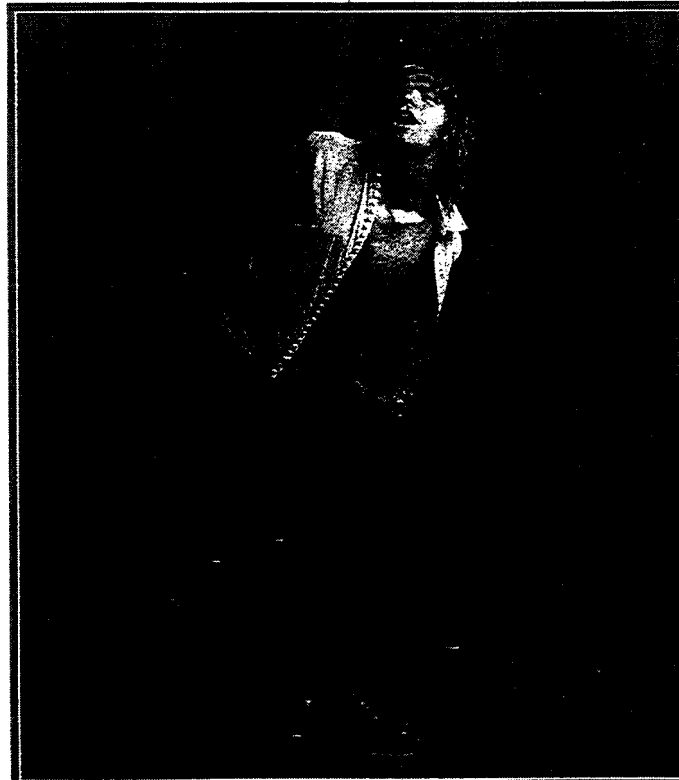
Of course, there's a truckload of irony pulling up here: The untainted maverick is about to start shooting what could easily become the most commercially successful event movies ever made. If dusted-off, 20-year-old releases can rake in a half billion bucks worldwide, imagine what sort of cash flow a fresh batch of *Star Wars* flicks will generate. Still, McGregor sees a difference. "I don't think of them as event movies," he says. "It's not like being in *Robocop 5* or something. The *Star Wars* movies are way beyond studio pictures. They're enormous. I can't say no."

There are certainly plenty of reasons to say yes—like his 16-month-old daughter, Clara (by wife Eve Maurakis, a French costume designer he met while filming an English TV production of *Charlotte's Web* two years ago). "I was 6 years old when *Star Wars* came out," he explains. "I remember standing outside school waiting to be picked up, so excited. And my daughter's going to be 6 when the new *Star Wars* movies are out. That's f---ing lovely in a way, you know?"

There's another family connection to the series as well: McGregor says his uncle, actor Denis Lawson (*Local Hero*), was "the only X-wing pilot to survive all three" of the original *Star Wars* movies. Lawson, not surprisingly, was also the inspiration for McGregor's own early acting ambitions.

"I was brought up in a small conservative town [Crieff] in Scotland," he says. "And my uncle used to come up from London in the '70s wearing sheepskin waistcoats and beads, with no shoes and long hair, giving people flowers and stuff. I just went, *wow*. Right then I decided to become an actor—even though I had no idea what that meant."

What it meant initially was leaving school at 16, a brief



AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO THE TRILOGY:

"They're just little fairy stories, really, there's not a great deal going on.... They go from here, and they get stuck here.... There's a fight there, and then they end up here."

stint at a Scottish repertory theater, then three years at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. What it means now is that McGregor can barely stroll the streets of London without triggering a reenactment of the train station mob scenes in *A Hornet's Day's Night*. "It's not that bad, but it is on the cusp of becoming a problem," says *Trainspotting* director Danny Boyle. "All that constant recognition gets tiresome after a while. He can't even pick his nose in public."

VISITING NEW YORK, DOWNING BREWS IN A CHELSEA restaurant, McGregor couldn't seem less concerned with the perils of fame—or maybe he's simply relishing his last taste of American anonymity. Unassuming, unpretentious, and on the way to becoming utterly sloshed, he comes across as the ultimate anti-celebrity, a bloke for all seasons. In any case, if anybody in the room is staring at him, it's only because he's been partying all night and sort of looks it (he's still got a big ink-stamp mark from a nightclub smudged on his wrist). "I love New York," he murmurs happily into his beer.

Of course, now that he's signed for *Star Wars*, these sorts of quiet public moments are history. As the new Kenobi, he'll be swarmed by fans in every restaurant and nightclub in every city on the planet. It's a huge change in his life, an instant thrust into global superstardom. "Ewan's got the world at his feet," as *Brassed Off* director Mark Herman puts it, "and that makes this a dangerous time for him." To deal with the intense pressure, McGregor is using that old Jedi mind trick of trying not to think about it. Instead, he's concentrating on his killer Alec Guinness impersonation.

"I *have* to get his accent," he says. "He's got this very specific older man's voice. It'd be great if I could trace it back to his youth and get it right." He takes a swig of beer, clears his throat, and gives it a whirl. "Yoooz the Force, Luke. Stretch out your *feeelings*."

Now, if only he could nail that Carrie Fisher impersonation. ■



BLOWING OFF STEAM

Rocking in the Velvet Goldmine; marching with Tara Fitzgerald in Brassed Off; soaking with Pillow Book's Vivian Wu

BIG SHOT



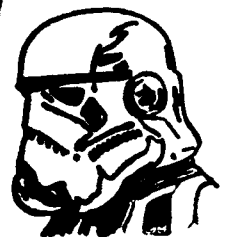
Photo: Paul Schirealdi

JURASSIC JAWAS

Star Wars: Power of the Force '97/Jurassic Park (Kenner)

1997 looks to be a *verrry* good year for the Cincinnati-based Kenner company. A long time ago and not so far away, the then-fledgling toy company found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow by snatching up the master toy license for "Star Wars." Twenty years later, Kenner is enjoying even greater success with its brand-new Star Wars toys, buoyed by the recent Special Edition re-releases of George Lucas' trilogy. Add to that Kenner's lines based on the "Jurassic Park" sequel "The Lost World" and "Batman & Robin," and you'll see that Kenner's got probably the three biggest licenses of the summer movie box office. And when it comes to associated toy sales, that's a no-brainer.

MOVE ALONG,
MOVE ALONG...





FROM A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

CONGRATS ON REACHING MILESTONE

Marti Schuller
415 S.E. Annette
Lee's Summit, MO 64063-3403

Cheree, you're to be commended on reaching this wonderful milestone of fifty great issues of SE. What a beautiful issue this one is, too! I loved the use of the color SW photos throughout as well, especially the front banner. Lovely!

Thanks for printing the lyrics to that gem "The Star Wars Cantina". While I have a copy of the tape that you were generous enough to share, having the words on paper is a pleasure.

I'd like to add my congratulations to both Susan Matthews and Martha Wells on their continuing success in the oceanic world of pro fiction. Well done!

While I always enjoy SE, I have to confess that I greatly relished this issue's "Meet the Southern Enclave..." The diversity of SW fans is always fascinating to me. What a mixed group we are, all brought together by our mutual love of three films. It's a little mind-boggling, to be honest, but I love it.

Again, thanks for all your years of hard work and loyalty. Long may you and SE continue to prosper and grow!

Now, briefly, to the letters.

Z. P. Florian: I love your idea for a funeral at MWC for all our Anakins. Let's do it. We mostly wear black anyway.

Lisa Cowan: Well, I do think we have to accept the new SW films as "canon", like it or not. However, this

does not mean we have to include them or coincide with them in our own writings. Technically, that will make a lot of stories "alternate", but we've always had such stories and, I suspect, always will. A good story is worth reading anytime, whether it accepts and incorporates the new films, adheres to that writer's former views, or veers off into a completely new direction. I do foresee some Anakin/Vader writers especially preferring to ignore the new films and continue writing as they always have. They will, IMO, maintain an audience, regardless, because they are good writers. Stories will appear, I'm sure, that deal with the new films, while others will further explore and expand only the original three movie characters. I hope there's room and tolerance for us all.

A. G. Steyn: Loved your additions to the "pants" game. Addictive, isn't it?

Maggie Nowakowska (and Susan): Sincerest condolences on your losses. It would be wonderful to see you in Lansing next year. We can celebrate our own "golden" half-century marks together while celebrating (?) the new SW film. Think you'll make it to the con? Any chance?

Kim Pecherski: Welcome! If you're joining the madness in Lansing again next year, be sure to stop by the Millennium Mall and introduce yourself. (Those name badges are too small for these trifocal eyes.) Sooner or later, we all seem to pass through this suite and it's a great place for meeting.

Your first LoC was fine. I look forward to more in the future.

On a personal note, I'm finally going to get to Star Tours and the new Indy experience since Dennis and I (and my sister and her husband) are off to celebrate our 29th anniversary in Orlando come October. I cannot tell you how I'm looking forward to this!