

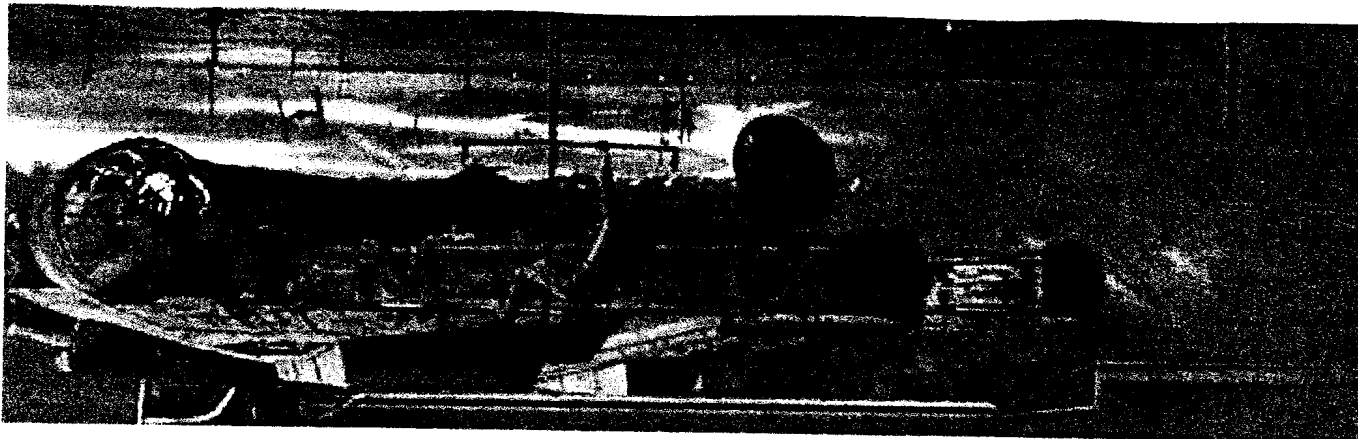


NON SEQUITUR

By Wiley



This isn't Star Wars, but I love it!



FROM A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

THE TRAILER

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December 31, 1998

So, what does everyone think of the trailer for Episode 1? I rate it as *fabulous*! My two favorite bits include the use of the “panels” (Every generation has a legend...). That style does a great job of setting the drama. Next, I am flabbergasted at how much the trailer evokes the spirit of ANH. Granted Lucas wrote and directed, so it should reflect the segment he directed. Still, I never thought it would take on that look. What did I expect? Well, long ago (in a galaxy...) I went on record saying I wouldn’t be fooled into thinking Lucas was finally making the other six films until I was in line the day it opened. Obviously, we are dealing with more than a rumor that Lucas might be getting ready for filming (remember those days, fellow dinosaurs?) — but I really have not been creating mental images of what the look of the next film would be. On that line of thinking — any style or look to the film should surprise me. This “going back to Tatooine” is a real treat, though!

Have your theater experiences with the trailer been like what my friends and I are having here? Every audience is greeting the trailer with applause!!! And I shall stress that this is for any genre film. You’d expect such reaction from a SF film crowd, but I’ve seen the trailer with non-SF films, and the applause is still there. The public is ready for SW to return!

I will make one quibble. The shot of countless battledroids (name?... though could these be the Clones?) is obviously a computer generated effect. I’m still not a huge fan of that medium. Like those folk who have marveled about the quality of the effects miniatures in the Smithsonian exhibit, I’m a model fan to the core. However, I imagine there was no other way to stage such a scene but by using computer FX.

RE the title: *The Phantom Menace*, I like it. It strikes me as fitting the “Flash Gordon” roots of the Saga. When said in its entirety, with *Star Wars: Episode 1 – The Phantom Menace*, it does have that epic ring to it. Also, as this film leads into a period of decline with the fall of Anakin and the Old Republic, I think it makes nice symmetry with the three word title *A New Hope*, which leads into the redemption of Anakin and the overthrow of the Empire.

Denise Roper: Welcome to SE. A sequel novel to *Splinter of the Mind’s Eye* would be a great idea. While I haven’t the time to read the dozen novels per month that are released (so I don’t even try to get into them), I’d leap at such a novel.

Picking up on your musing that the Tree in TESSB could harbor some sort of trapped spirit, like Merlin in the Crystal Cave is a super notion! Works for me.

Judith Klinger: I was mostly joking in that earlier issue when I went into a brief discussion of what the Force is but I said that I had to drop it before I got too mathematical and was driven out of SE like a droid at the bar during Happy Hour in Mos Eisley. I do not have some elaborate theory full of quantum equations that I’m not sharing. If anyone is interested in such stuff (particularly discussions of “hyperspace”), Michio Kaku is the author to look up. Believe it or not, it is fairly accessible to anyone with an

interest in astronomy. The fractal reference I brought in arose as I thought there existed a parallel in the SW universe when some people look about and see evidence of the Force while others are oblivious to it. It struck me as how one can look at many fractals and see a general shape but miss the endless self-similar patterns imbedded within it. That takes deeper, closer inspection.

A couple of people mentioned my work toward my Masters degree – I still have one more summer, a six-week session, to go. It should be wrapped up by mid-August of '99. (Though *thanks* for the early congrats...I'll take that as a prediction of good things to come!) As much work as it's been, I have thoroughly enjoyed it. It's been like summer camp for nerds, and I revel in that sort of stuff. It is very concentrated, though. I'm in classes technically only during the 6-week term during the summer, and that it has proved to be an intense time. (And last summer I got to "celebrate" its concluding by coming down with my second bout of pneumonia! Cough, cough! Not fun.) Even so, this has been a fabulous experience. Now the big decision...what to do next?

Pat Grant mentioned the SW Trivial Pursuit Game. Yes, that's great fun! I got it for my birthday this past November from my brother and his family. (Last year was the talking Darth Vader bank...do they know me, or what? Though for Christmas this year I passed my brother the hint that I was looking for these two new MATH books available through Amazon.Com ... and they got them for me. Can't wait. Well, I said I was a nerd!) The R2 "randomizer" could be more user-friendly and there should be more characters/players, but that's picking nits. The other day, though, the player who went first ran off five pie slices in a row before a question tripped him up. The other player and I hadn't even been asked our first question. For it to be a "fair" competition, with mega-fans like us there should be some sort of limit set (no more than three rolls in a row, to let the other players have a chance, or some sort of agreement). ((*Ed: When Katy and I play, we set a limit on number of turns a player can have. It's more even-handed that way.*))

On Lucas and this nasty habit of changing story elements (this has been the subject of many letters), I am bothered by it to a degree, but am not looking to make it a major bone of contention. Here I am referring mostly to the stuff that is mentioned in interviews from 20 years ago or in a program book, and the like. Filming "Special Editions" is a different, bigger kettle of fish (Greedo did *not* fire first!). I'm coming into this topic mostly in response to the couple of folk who mentioned the age differences of the "twins" as reported in the script to ANH or the novelizations – and now Luke and Leia are both officially 20 at the time of ANH.

It seems Lucas is doing nothing new under the sun that authors have not been doing down the ages. Consider the

recent Branagh adaptation of the "complete" *Hamlet*. From what I understand, there probably were as many versions of each play when originally staged in Shakespeare's day as there were performances (an exaggeration, but probably not all that great of one). Often they would change a scene that wasn't working, hoping for more positive audience reception, or would tailor a scene to appeal to a particular audience member, often a rich patron who needed to be flattered or would be offended by a reference. When the plays appeared in text, there were other changes (beyond the "bad quartos" which were rip-offs, reconstructions from someone's memory and not meant for publication by the author or his friends), including censorship (By Jove's replacing By Gods). The prof I had for Intro to Shakespeare (took it in fall of '98) described this as the texts being very "fluid." Branagh's "complete" version probably was never staged for Elizabethan audiences, but rather it included the several alternate scenes that the companies had tried out over the years. Forgive this next great stretch, but I liken that to someone unearthing – in three hundred years time – the "complete" script of *Clue*, including all the alternate endings that were used in the cable versions. (I heard there were different endings, in which each character was the murderer, depending on which version you watched.)

Bringing this back to Lucas, I can live with his not being entirely set in his mind at the time of ANH's filming as to whether Luke and Leia were brother and sister – never mind whether they were twins or not. Statements from that time should not be held over his head and constrain every step he takes in making the prequels. Neither do I feel his changing the course of plot elements should paint him as wishy-washy, stumbling his way through the Saga.

While I do hope that in 300 years they will not be reviving cultural icons such as the movie *Clue*, I do think the Shakespeare to Lucas analogy works. Granted, GL is no Shakespeare, but remember that Elizabethan drama was "low-brow" entertainment for the masses. It was definitely not considered respectable literature at the time. The SW Saga of our era is, hopefully, something we will be handing down to future generations (and not *The Jerry Springer Show*).

Tina Bentrup: Glad you enjoyed my medieval garb photo. This past Renaissance Faire season I "upgraded" the weaponry to a hand-and-a-half broadsword. I call it Orcrist, in honor of Thorin's sword. Fun stuff!

I feel quite envious of those going to MediaWest this year! That should be some sort of special event. It really is hard to believe that there will be a new SW film out as we head to our keyboards for the next issue of SE. Thanks again, Cheree, for providing this forum!

ENJOY!!!

STORIES IDEAS

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January 2, 1999

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great holiday season. 1999 is going to be a year of change in SW fandom. Episode One will either be loved, hated, or possibly ignored by some fans: I know Lucas can't please everyone. Let's hope for the best and promise to never let our love for the original trilogy wane. *Trek* fans, did the appearance of *ST:TNG* lessen your love for the original series? I'd imagine there are fans who like only the original series, or only the newer t.v. series offerings, or only the movies, but you're all *Trek* fans, right? Did the new cast of characters on *TNG* or *DS9* or *Voyager* diminish or augment *ST* fandom? I'm not a *Trekker*, can someone answer this for me? Should we expect similar phenomenon in *SW* fandom? (Ed: I was an original *ST* fan from 1966 and still love it with a passion. I also love the other three series. Far from usurping *TOS*, the others have expanded the *ST* universe immensely. I think the *Prequels* will do the same for *SW*.)

I have to agree with Matthew about the prequels changing our perspective of the existing trilogy. This is inevitable. Our views of Anakin and Obi-Wan are likely to be changed the most, but there will be other altered views which we don't expect. We'll learn a great deal more about the Jedi and the Force which will change the way we see the existing trilogy. I would expect to see new fanzines popping up all over the place, zines dedicated to prequel characters only. That's great. I just hope the original characters won't be ignored. I am still hoping that Lucas will bring them all back in a sequel trilogy one day.

Deb: That "Behind the Magic" CD ROM is really something! I loved seeing the deleted Biggs scenes and the rare cast photos. What I'd really like to see is that sandstorm scene which was cut from ROTJ. Has anyone ever written a zine story about the sandstorm?

Belea: Speaking of zine stories, there's an idea — put the sandstorm back in ROTJ. Write about Lando's first meeting with Vader and Fett at Cloud City, or about Luke and Han's night out in the Hoth blizzard. What did Leia and Chewie go through when Luke and Han were lost out there in the storm? I'll bet they stayed up all night worrying. R2 and 3PO probably did, too. How did Lando find employment at Jabba's palace, and what were his experiences there? What happened to Leia when Wicket took her back to the Ewok village? And who made that strange dress of animal skins

she's wearing? What happened to Luke's X-Wing after he left Cloud City? Did Vader confiscate it, access his data banks, find out about Dagobah? Or is all that info stashed inside R2's memory banks? I don't know if any of these ideas have been used before. Anyone else have ideas for stories?

Z. P.: Yes, the no-slash part of fandom needs a few explosive stories exploring Han and Leia's relationship and Luke's relationship with a woman ... how about Mara Jade? Yeah, let's stir up some controversy here!

Folks, if you haven't read Timothy Zahn's latest novel, *Vision of the Future*, I'm about to spoil it for you. According to Zahn, Luke and Mara have been in denial about their feelings for each other for quite some time, and they finally realize the depth of their love for one another as the result of the two of them linking minds through the Force. They have to do this to "fight as one" during a particularly intense battle scene. When the immediate threat has passed and the two of them take a moment to relax, he asks her to marry him, and she accepts! Mara also has a vision of the future in which she's married to Luke, and there are children in their lives. (It's about time, Skywalker!) So would anyone care to write about Luke and Mara being romantically involved? I think there are lots of possibilities for stories here.

Everyone: Informal survey — What do you all think about Luke and Mara as a couple? Love it? Hate it? Could care less? Inquiring minds want to know! I, for one, am glad Mara has reformed, renounced the darkside, and decided to become a Jedi. She's smart and funny, and Luke's life will never be boring so long as she's around. I think that they make a great team! Comments?

Did anyone see Mark Hamill on *Just Shoot Me*? I got a kick out of that episode. I liked his appearance on *The Simpsons* even better. "Luke, Be a Jedi Tonight" would be a great filk, so someone finish it! I also caught that episode of *Celebrity Deathmatch* on MTV which featured a claymation "Mark Hamill" and "Peter Mayhew." Did anyone else see this one? Funny stuff!

Amanda: It's great to hear from you, Skysister. I'm glad to know that you've got another issue of *Echo Three* planned for Media West this year. You can reserve a copy for me now. Luke fans, rejoice!

Gerald: I enjoyed your essay, "The Day I Met Gary Kurtz." Kurtz confirmed what we all suspected about the Greedo scene: Han was meant to have shot first. I knew it! I also agree with what he said about the re-editing messing up the music cues. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the *TESB:SE* when those scenes of Vader going to his shuttle are inserted among the original footage of Luke's rescue from beneath Cloud City. The new scenes really lessen the impact of this sequence by interrupting the tension John Williams helped to create with his excellent scoring for this segment.

Speaking of John Williams, does anyone know if there is an address by which he can be reached? Does the composer have a fan club? (He should!)

I really love his music. If anyone has any articles on him, send them my way, or ask Cheree to print one or two in SE. Oh, and does anyone know the release dates for the Episode One movie soundtrack and novelization? I am eagerly awaiting both. I've read that Terry Brooks is writing the novelization, and that it will contain a great deal of background information that won't be in the film. Definitely a must-read.

Well, here's to a new year of SW mania. Happy 1999!

BALANCING THE FORCE

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February 8, 1999

How incredible that we are now waiting for the prequel. Swimming in rumors. The actors, Ewan McGregor — went and watched *Trainspotting* to check him out; he has my full approval (big grin), Liam Neeson of course is Liam Neeson. Half of the rumors are about little baby Anakin being someone foretold in prophecy, to balance the Force, whatever that means, does that mean that his destiny was to turn to the dark side, whether he wanted it or not? Lucas said somewhere that Anakin accepted his destiny. Accepted, as in making a conscious choice to turn, because it was necessary for the balance of light and dark? That would be an interesting idea. Seen some parts of the making of the prequel videos at the official SW site. The most promising was that the guys who worked out the lightsaber fights said that nobody had seen a fully trained Jedi fight yet. We had seen, he said, an aged Kenobi fighting with a severely crippled Vader, then we had seen Vader fight with badly trained boy. But for the prequel, he said, they had to create a fighting style that had to be incredible, to make it believable that the Jedi used short range lightsabers in a world of blasters and beat the heck out of everybody. I liked that, apparently a lot of thought went into this. Liked young Kenobi's braid too. Somehow I can't believe that the Jedi Council would deny the training from a kid with incredible Force talent. That sounds like a recipe for making the kid an outcast and then blaming him for being one. We'll see. Can't tell you how much I'd like to know who is going to play the young Anakin. Apparently, rumors circulated about Mark Hamill's son, but that was not in any way confirmed. (Would

be a cute turn, if it were true.) But I think Lucas will go for an unknown... I also hope that we'll get Chewie and maybe a fleeting glimpse of a baby Han. It'd cost nothing and surely it'd make a whole lot of fans very happy. Can't wait 'til May 21. Lucas did say that the prequels will change the way we look at the trilogy. I wonder what he meant by that. I already look at the trilogy somewhat differently. I almost see Ewan McGregor behind Alec Guinness's face. No doubt that we'll have a great time discussing the prequel in the coming issues of SE. Whether with joy or gnashing of teeth, doesn't matter. I'm looking forward to it anyway. Was there ever in the history of literature or myth a similar event, giving the prequel after the story? I don't think so. We are a lucky bunch, being so royally entertained.

ANYWHERE BUT ENDOR!

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Hi, folks! I survived Moviecon#1 - War of the Santas (a/k/a Smutcon '98)! Those of you who read my report know what I've accomplished/suffered through/enjoyed to no end (take your pick).

Okay, folks — the STEYN is coming. I hope to go to Dallas (and then go see *Phantom Menace* with the boys ... there's nothing like sitting in the back row of a dark theater with SW in front of your nose — and assorted SW characters flanking you left and right), and also attend MWC (for the first and maybe only time in my life).

So, now they've elected Harrison to be "Sexiest Man of the Year"? That probably makes a certain Carrie F. very happy. And Barb Anderson ... Bet they stuffed the ballot box. But then, I shall not complain. The man does it for me, too. Drool! There's only one "Indiana Solo."

On Saturday, November 20th, BBC World News ran (I taped it) the infamous new prequel trailer plus some one- or two-sentence interviews with various fans at the Smithsonian SW exhibition. Okay, so now I've see the trailer ... Say, what were you thinking, George?

This is no longer *Star Wars*, this is Special Effects Wars. And even more creatures for the Galactic zoo. Groan! As if there weren't too many of those already. And please: what is that stupid, awful thing that looks like a cross between a puppet from the *Dinosaurs* sitcom and Roger Rabbit?? Is that supposed to be the sidekick of our new hero? Kind of a Chewie replacement? No way, José! This creature — whatever it is — does *not* find my approval. It falls into the same category as flop-eared blue elephants (Max Rebo), and

the Yuzzem. Only worse: it is completely computer generated. I can handle CGI dinos, Rontos, Dewbacks ... I cannot handle CGI main characters. And if I see a computer generated bounty hunter, I'll go ballistic. I *did* enjoy seeing Klaatu somewhere in the crowd (he must be ages old when we see him again in Jabba's palace in ROTJ), and Yoda was a sight for sore eyes. Location-wise, we're mainly back on good ol' Tatooine and, Force be with us, the forest moon of Endor. Figures. George discovered some left-over Ewoks to be used yet again in his never-ending story. Lucas, haven't we suffered enough? We had ROTJ, we had two all-Ewok movies ... and now we're going back to Endor *again*? What about Corellia? We could see how Mama Solo changes the diapers on Baby Han. Or how about a little sidetrip to Concord Down in the Mandalorean system? We might catch a glimpse of two freckle-faced, reddish-blond identical twin brothers (Sheckil? Mereel? Whatever their names really are) taking their first insecure steps. Can't we possibly go to Alderaan? Dantooine? Hoth? Dagobah? Anyplace but Endor?!

Did you read that the "Imperial Palace" (in Caserta, Italy) caught fire? Hope this wasn't the work of some Lucasfilm maniacs...

About the new "Jeremiah Bollux" (JB's official nickname ... and so fitting) shows *First Frontier* and *Aristocrats*:

First Frontier is a sci-fi show taking place on Earth (in the future, of course). People in it wear elaborate, Renaissance-type costumes. JB plays a 300-year-old cantakerous drunkard who is thought of by the others as not being human, and who was returned to Earth after (as I understand it) an almost "Buck Rogers"-type AWOL time in space. *First Frontier* is an ongoing show (much like B5), so you will have to see ALL episodes to be fully in the picture.

Future plotlines? Hm, let's see ... Luke, sexually frustrated, tries his luck with the farm animals on his home planet. Three weeks later, a search party is launched ("Boys, the Skywalker kid went into that barn 15 days ago and hasn't been seen since. And while you're at it, check that ol' Bantha cow in the last tie-stall. He might have fallen in!").

Or how about this: Kenobi's nose suddenly starts growing longer and longer with each sentence he speaks. It takes the special medical skills of 2-1B to find out that he is suffering from a bad case of Clintonitis Pinocciodae maximus.

Or maybe: Threepio is elected into the senate of the New Republic for successfully talking blech all day, being a nuisance, and having no clue as to what is really going on around him — all the basic requirements for making it in politics.

Pat Grant: Alan Rickman, huh? After seeing some of his movies, I think he'd make a nice addition to the SW saga — playing an over-the-edge Sith Lord, for instance. Only

slightly more serious than his "George of Nottingham."

Creation Con as well as ICON are not among the faves of the stars, that much is clear. Bulloch and Mayhew both voiced their unhappiness with the strategies of these "con artists". For instance, it was not really John Barrett's fault that Galactic Entertainment went belly-up last year, but actually the doing of ICON. Hm! And Creation is putting such a tight leash on them, the poor boys are actually choking. I guess that's why they liked Jens Reinheimer's Moviecon in Böblingen: they were allowed to wander, drink beer, eat, hug the girls, play with computers, and throw snowballs. No leash in sight!

Okay, all for now. Hope to see, hear, and hug you all at either Dallas and/or Lansing later in May. So, until we meet: Put Capt. Cargo in the Solo hold, fly casual, and always let the Wookiee win!

FEEL THE EXCITEMENT

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January 27, 1999

I don't know about you guys, but I feel like I can just sit still, close my eyes, and just *feel* the excitement and anticipation building as we grow closer to the release of *The Phantom Menace*.

We're planning on really doing up the cantina at MWC this year into something really special. If anyone has any ideas or would like to help, contact me right away. I'm especially in need of a few artists, including someone who can do scenes of ships in space. If you can provide artwork but won't be coming to the convention, I will be happy to pay the postage.

Matthew Whitney: I really liked the way you focused on the issue of torture ... that the droid torture was, as you called it, a brush stroke to establish the evil of Jabba. I agree.

Okay, even though it is off the subject, re the Face on Mars ... I have seen the newer photos and do not find them disappointing at all. They are at a different angle, but there are still tell-tale depressions (dark areas). If this *thing* was built by extraterrestrials, it could be that instead of a full 3D structure (i.e., pyramids and the Sphinx), it could be simply something like a relief painting (called a bas relief, I think), the kind that starts out flat but sticks out a little in some places. When viewing it with that in mind, you can still see the face. However, I'm not opposed to the idea that it could be natural. I've seen natural rock and tree formations that

seem to resemble people's faces and bodies. So, who knows? I'd like to believe it was ET's. I just wish we could get a team of archaeologists and geologists there to find answers.

Denise Roper: Hi! And welcome to SE! By the way, great "pants" quotes. Glad to hear you're another *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* fan.

Regarding your comment to Judith Klinger last issue, I think this has "officially" been answered for us. In one article about the new movie, I read that we would learn that "Darth" is a title, not a name. This seems to be verified with the introduction of Darth Sidious in the new movie. My only question to that would be, why two titles? He was also referred to as Lord Vader. Was he ever (in the movies) called "Lord Darth Vader" all at one time? I guess it could be that "Darth" is a specific Sith title and "Lord" is a title bestowed on him by the Emperor. Historically, royalty would give out titles of Lord to favored people, usually coming along with a land grant or other financial boon. So, what about the term "Dark Lord"? What's confusing now is that there are a lot of terms we've come to accept as "canon" only to find out they were never used in the movies. Do you realize the flagship we all know and "love" — the *Executor* — is never mentioned by name in the movies? (At least I was told this; I haven't gone back and rewatched them to specifically check on this.) Anyway, it makes it confusing. (And don't forget the term "Sith" was never mentioned either!) ((*Ed*: Nor was the Emperor ever called "Palpatine", nor was Han ever referred to as a "Corellian", nor were the Sand People ever called "Tusken Raiders." No one ever heard Leia name her father as Bail Organa, nor was her last name ever mentioned. Owen and Beru were never called Lars, few of the Imperial officers were ever named, and none of the bounty hunters save for Boba Fett. Chewie's home planet was never identified as Kashyyyk and none of the Ewoks were ever identified by name. There is a LOT that we take as "canon" that came from the novelizations or "side sources".))

One last comment re your comment to Debbie about the two year difference between Luke and Leia ... Of course we all know George just had a small continuity mistake there. But I've already explained it off just as you mentioned — Luke's age is in Tatooinian years and Leia's is in Alderaan years. Makes a lot of sense. Who knows, maybe George really did intend it that way.

Belea: Thanks for the vote of confidence as for me organizing the bus trip to the movie. My only problem is that I'm sure they would require money up front for the bus and all, and if we don't get enough people I would not want, or be able, to cover the difference out of my pocket. However, the situation may have changed. I don't think we'll need a bus. I'd be more than willing to organize a car pool. As it turns

out, we have a new theater in Lansing and it is only about one mile from the hotel! For those of you familiar with the area, from the hotel you go past Denny's to KFC on the corner. Turn left there then right at the next street and you come to Target. After Target, you come to Sam's Grocery Warehouse. The new cinema, Celebration Cinema, is just past Sam's. I'd say at the most a mile and a half. They have one screen with the THX system. No other theater in town has THX.

I'm also going to talk to the theater manager and try to coordinate things with Lori Chapek-Carleton if I can get hold of her. ((*Ed*: By all means, everyone let Lori know if you want to go en masse to the movie. You can email her at MdiaWst@AOL.com))

Tim Blaes: Have I got a book for you! Have you ever read a book called *Secrets of Our Spaceship Moon*? If not, I'll show it to you at MWC (remind me!)

There are several cross-overs that would work well with *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. I think we've already mentioned some of the obvious — *X-Files*, *Millennium*, and *She Wolf of London* (by the way, love the spotlight on Oz this season!), but how about these: *Buffy and Friday the 13th (the Series)*, *Buffy and Forever Knight*, *Buffy and Dark Shadows*, *Buffy and Poltergeist: The Legacy*, *Buffy and The Crow ...* I could go on and on, but for one that would really be scary, how about *Buffy and 90210* (vampires invade Beverly Hills and turn all the 90210 stars into vampires and Buffy has to stake them all). Well, one can dream...

Tina: Glad to hear I'm not the only one (okay, Kim, I know you didn't either) who hated the title *The Phantom Menace*. But I do have to say it has been growing on me and must admit it now sounds okay to me.

A. G. Steyn: Yes, it was quite a year last year. I've always liked Dave and was pleased to find out that Jeremy is equally nice. Anyone have any ideas on why the big difference between the British SW actors and the American ones? (The British stars just seem so much more open and amiable.)

Well, that's it for this time. Hope to see as many of you as possible at MWC. And if you do want to go to the movie en masse at MWC, write and let me know. And let me know if you'll have a car and how many you can fit in your car. See you there!



LIGHTENING THE PURSE

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Hi, everyone! First, let me reiterate the praise everyone else heaped on last issue and say "Congrats on #50, Cheree"! Even though I've missed out on the first forty-some issues, I'm glad you've held-out for this late-comer to join in. Thanks!

I loved reading all the bios; it was nice to add faces and personalities to the names I knew only through zines thus far. I'm really looking forward to meeting everyone at next Media.

Marti S. : Thanks for the invite to the Millennium Mall. I actually lightened my purse there quite a bit in the last two years since "discovering" zines. I'll be back this year to try to pick up some back issues. Last year I did get a copy of the SW Bibliography, which has proved itself a valuable resource.

Matthew W.: A good rationalization of droid torture. GL has already stated that the third episode will be dark in nature to depict Anakin's fall to the Dark Side, but I wonder how brave he (GL) will be in depicting this. What we know of turning to the Dark Side involves emotional, and probably physical, anguish. Given the example of *Temple of Doom*, can GL convince viewers of Anakin's fall, remain true to the characters and story, and still produce a film which will not receive a backlash from parents of young viewers? While I realize I'm a few years ahead of myself, I can't help but wonder.

Belea K.: A wake after the "funeral" sounds only fitting. How about a funeral procession, with pallbearers carrying a litter filled with Vader/Anakin stories, art and zines? The procession could start at the Dealers Room (where it all began...) and wind through the hotel, ending at the room for the funeral. Also, I will volunteer to make up black ribbons which could be worn throughout the con.

Tina B.: So Dan wouldn't let you buy the \$6000.00 Vader suit, huh? Could you imagine trying to explain to the loan officer at the bank why you need this \$6000.00 loan? Do you think Lord Vader would qualify as a home improvement loan? I hear they're giving great rates!! :-)) I can't wait to see you and Dan again in May!!

Hope to meet everyone at Media!!

I MAY BE SCRUFFY...

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I suppose it's official now. A late-night entertainment news show stated that George Lucas no longer has any intention of doing Episodes 7, 8, or 9. I suspected as much, so it's not really a surprise. It's still a let-down, though. The Fox Network has been nagging George to let them do a Young Jedi Knights series, so perhaps those story elements won't go to waste. Most likely, though, we will have to settle with pro novels and zines.

Marti Schuller: In an old zine I have buried somewhere in storage is a filk, "You May Be Right, I May Be Scruffy, But It Just Might Be a Scoundrel That You're Looking For", set to an old Billy Joel song whose name I can't remember. ((Ed: "*I Might Be Crazy*", also used as the theme song for *Dave's World TV show* starring Harry Anderson as *Dave Barry*)) I think I'd kill to hear Billy himself perform it.

No matter what "canon" is, all fan fiction is "alternate" even if it could fit perfectly with the official material. Even if the Prequels are embraced by most of fandom, I would like to see more experimentation. DC comics regularly publishes special stories called Elseworlds® that take their characters out of continuity and into different times and realities, such as Superman fighting in the Civil War or Batman becoming a vampire. We could explore our own alternates, such as a Luke & Leia who were never separated at birth, or a Han who made it through the Imperial Academy. We could reincarnate them into Arthurian myth or Native American folklore. Our options are open.

Matthew Whitney: Regarding "The Emperor's Advocate" by David Bratman. In the movie I saw, Luke did fail, he got his hand sliced off, his world as he understood it turned upside down, and the friends he came to rescue were either carted off or had to rescue *him*. He nearly died. As for Anakin tossing the Emperor down the shaft "a reflex of pure anger", what options were open to him that would have saved his son?

The exact nature of the Martian "face" aside, the behavior of those in authority against those who brought this matter to light is unforgivable. The universe/reality is so vast, and our knowledge so limited, we are not unlike blind men groping an elephant. Everything we learn implies 10 more things we don't know, so there is always an x-factor. Our scientific base is not as rigid as you and others seem to think, its tectonic plates constantly grinding and erupting. Examples: For years the existence of ball lightning was dismissed as folklore or optical illusion by most scientists, until it was

finally observed in '62 inside an airplane by Kent University Professor R. C. Jennison. Ironically, ball lightning is now used in the same blanket fashion to debunk UFO sightings the same way swamp gas was.) "Disease is caused by creatures too small to be seen? Unscientific rubbish!! Why, we might as well believe flies spontaneously generate from rotting meat." Ideally, a scientist should keep their preconceptions in check and reject nothing out of hand. Yet time after time facts are tossed aside and dismissed purely because they don't fit the dogma. This kink of backward thinking has more to do with politics than science.

There was, and remains, no reason to dismiss the existence of artificial structures on Mars. Those who tried to prove this were harassed and snidely ridiculed by those in authority. I find it hard to trust or respect that authority.

Denise Roper: Alan Dean Foster told me once that he didn't think there was much chance of a sequel to *Splinter* ever coming about. Although that was before the big SW fiction boom. I tend to agree with him.

Tina Bentrup: I don't understand what you and the others have against *The Phantom Menace* as a title. There's been so much grouching about it lately. I suspect that the menace of the title is the formation of the Empire, a "phantom" nobody sees coming. If I remember correctly, the title of the very first adventure serial was *The Phantom Empire*. I have no problem with the title.

Pat Grant: I looked all over MWC last year for Buffy zines but couldn't find any. There had better be some this year.

Cosmic "ley lines"? That could work. I'd bet that Alderaan's destruction disturbed the Force for more than just a moment, muddying the waters for all Force sensitives, including Vader.

Judith Klinger: The latest issue of *STAR WARS Insider* contains a fascinating article on the first rough-cut of SW minus SFX but containing 30-40% different footage; alternate angles, additional action, longer cuts and deleted scenes. This "lost cut" exists as a silent b&w print, but the article was filled with color stills taken from original dailies of the deleted scenes, so perhaps sound and color could be restored. This cut could be great fodder for a documentary/retrospective. It wouldn't need Dolby Sound or a digital print, so it could be produced cheaply. Various people could insert comments without really disrupting anything. In fact I have this image in my mind of Mark and/or Carrie, C-3PO & R2, their silhouettes visible as if they're in a theater, as they make their comments. That could be fun.

A. G. Steyn: I've heard of all sorts of clothing fetishes, but you're the first I've found to be turned on by armor. I suppose I'm not really surprised, but wouldn't it be too awkward to be erotic?

Cheree: Black & white art can be colored. Comic books do it all the time. If you are able to scan the original artwork into a computer, you might even be able to color it digitally. The color work in #50 was nice, but didn't you lift it off the Web? They don't look so cool in b&w. Any chance for new mastheads? ((Ed: Sure, you can scan and digitally color stuff ... providing you have a high resolution scanner, a bitmapped graphics program into which to download the scanned file and edit it, a PC with enough RAM to run it, a color printer to print it out on, and above all the know how, patience and time to do it. You also need the funds to have color copies run (which cost me — at the discount price my printer gives me for volume business — 85¢ per copy as opposed to 3.5¢ per copy for b&w, a price that is only 25 times higher than b&w printing. Anyone want to pay about \$15.00 or \$20.00 each for an SE??). I did the color issue as a special, one-timer, to celebrate SE's 50th issue. I can't afford to do it on a regular basis. And, yes, I did swipe the photo mastheads from the SW website. I'll no doubt go back to the traditional mastheads soon, tho.))

Femme Fatales ran a list of the 50 Sexiest Figures in Science Fiction. Carrie Fisher came in #2 between Yvonne (Batgirl) Craig #1 and Gillian Anderson #3. In a one page article Carrie tells what it was like writing and episode of *Young Indy*: "George is incredibly visual. There's different kinds of ways of expressing yourself, and George has a visual conception. I have my metaphors. They're visual, but they're still verbal. So when it comes to writing dialogue, George and I disagreed. We had those little boxes where you could push a button, and they said, 'fuck you, eat shit, you're an asshole.' And we just were pushing those at each other, and that's how it kind of disintegrated. I finally got my way but then he rewrote me, I think. George is George. Both he and Steven are very clear about what they want." I suppose this means *Episode Two: Surrender the Ewok* isn't going to happen.

Metaphors be with you...



GOT ME PSYCHED!

Debbie Kittle
11521 Idlewood Rd.
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Feb 10, 1999

Happy New Year one and all! My winter was starting off nicely but has it fizzled! What a big bummer! ((Ed: How do feel now that that Nor'easter hit? I heard Washington had 7 ft. of snow or something like that!))

So thoughts on the *Phantom Menace* trailer? I enjoyed it!! It looks great and has it got me psyched to stand in line.

January 31st was a sad day here in D.C. The exhibit closed down. It's still planning on touring but no word yet as to where and when.

Matthew: I loved the way you said "a new perspective on the exiting trilogy." That's exactly the way I feel. Well put!

I think Biggs joined the Rebels because he'd seen too much, been ordered to do things his conscience was very uncomfortable with.

Denise: Welcome to SE. Good to see you here. Of course, I would love to see a young Han Solo in the prequels, but I don't expect that to happen.

As for the age discrepancies, I think GL had major plot points down but some details he did make up as he went along. If we only took what was said in the movies, we'd have no idea of Luke and Leia's age, just that they're the same age (whatever that may be) in ROTJ.

Judith: Yes, there is a CD ROM out called "Behind the Magic" that has missing scenes from the trilogy (Biggs and cantina) as well as some incredible never before seen stills! I have it but not a CD-ROM drive so have to rely on my sister's unit to look through it. BTM is the incredible. I'd highly recommend it! If you can't find it over in Germany, we can look for it while at MW.

Sorry this is short but it's been an incredibly busy past few months. Fly Casually and see most of you at MW!

"I've got a bad feeling about this." - Han Solo

"Oh, it's gonna be so much more than a bad feeling."

- Ares, *God of War*



BACKING OFF

Tina Inge Bentrup
5325 Browns Gap Road
Knoxville, TN 37918

Well, I'm beginning to back off of my strong stand against the title *The Phantom Menace*. Getting used to it I am, yes. In fact, there's so much out there about the prequel. I almost want to hide my eyes. I'm not sure I want to know this much about it before I see it. But then I went ahead and bought the February issue of *Vanity Fair*. How can you not?

Santa was good to us this year: when the dust had settled on Christmas Day, we found ourselves in possession of *SW Incredible Cross-Sections*, *The SW Visual Dictionary*, *Sansweet's SW Encyclopedia*, and *The SW Trivial Pursuit Game*. I'm still drooling over the Vader page in the *Visual Dictionary*. Unfortunately, I was down with a persistent cold/cough all during Christmas, and had to miss 4 concerts, 3 church services, 2 Christmas parties, and a partridge in a pear tree. I'm only now beginning to get my voice back.

Gerald Crotty: I enjoyed your bit about meeting Gary Kurtz, but mostly I enjoyed seeing a picture of YOU. Gosh, I had thought you were an OLD geezer!

Marti Schuller: Congratulations on being a Mother-in-Law! How did it go with the formal?

Denise Roper: Welcome to SE! I too expect Palpie to be a charismatic leader a la Hitler (au Hitler?). In the above-mentioned *Vanity Fair* article, Lucas says, "Palpatine is a wonderful guy in this movie." Cue for "I'm in love with a wonderful guy"? Sorry, I can't say I liked *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*. Yes, it did leave too many threads dangling, especially poor Darth minus one arm down in a deep dark pit. Another fan fiction sequel that might interest you is Joyce Yasner's "Fragment of the Splinter" in the 1982 zine *Imperial Entanglements*. Like most of Joyce's writing, it is daring, funny, and shamelessly Vader-centered.

Belea Kenney: Don't feel bad about not being on-line. The little bit I've read of SW discussions there is *far inferior* to what we have here in SE. Less thoughtful, more repetitive, and oh God the atrocious spelling! Besides, it's all going to go haywire in the year 2000 anyway.

Pat Grant: Interesting line of thought comparing Palpie to Richard III (one of my heroes, by the way) and offering the suggestion that the Alliance might re-write history just as the Tudors did after 1485. The reason this argument doesn't work (not even for you) is that SW is *myth*, not history. (And not science fiction, either, which most of the professional SW writers don't seem to understand).

What's the latest on getting a big group together at MWC and going to the movie by bus? Have you heard from Lori

yet? I agree with Belea that Lori probably has enough on her plate without organizing this. When will we know which theaters have been selected for Episode I showings? So many questions, so little time...

Speaking of time, it's Super Bowl Sunday, and we have some weird aliens coming over, so I gotta go. Laugh it up, fuzballs...

P.S. Speaking of the Super Bowl, did anybody see the commercial for the Austin Powers movie? It starts out with the Emperor's window-on-the-stars, in front of which you see a black throne with its back turned toward you. Over the top of the chair you can see the top of a pale, bald head! And then you hear the familiar sound of Vader's respirator! And your mouth is hanging open and you're thinking, "My God, is this another SW trailer?" And then the chair swivels around to face you, and it's this bald guy stroking a cat like in the James Bond movies and he says, "You were expecting someone else, maybe?" I couldn't close my mouth for 5 minutes afterward!

GASPING!

Catherine Churko
590 Ft. Washington Avenue, Apt. 1M
New York, NY 10033-2041

January 31, 1999

Hi and healthy, happy new year to all. Hope anyone near areas hurt by the ice storms, twisters, heavy rains and floods, have made it through okay. Are there things people still need?

Not-so-fun times at my end: (Esp. August-October, somewhat better now). This kept me too busy and frazzled to remember SE's 51st deadline until long gone. Early on in first August weekend, my dad complained of pain in moving his shoulder. By mid-Sunday he couldn't get up/down/around without help. To ER on Monday, he was told he had a micro-tear and to contact his shoulder doctor (old injury), and had a slight fever they couldn't figure out nor locate through tests.

By day 6, I had my mom contact their doctor and demand he be taken in for surgery. We were both nearer to exhaustion than not. Surgery went well but he had a blood infection. Kept him hospitalized 3-1/2 weeks more with IV antibiotics. He hardly did any rehab because of the pain nor was gotten out of bed, so he lost the ability to dress, get up/down, walk (all he *could* do before, sometimes with difficulty).

He was sent to a nursing home closeby in September where he's been ever since. Psychologically, it was touch

and go for a few weeks, but he's seemed to turn around. Still were a lot of on-holds, setbacks at first to steady rehab. It's slow but he's made more progress since December holidays. We really don't want him home until he can take care of himself, because we can't in any extended, constant physical way.

SF Realms: Just saw *ST: Insurrection*. Enjoyed a lot of it. Good twists, subtext, humor. I agree a little, especially toward the end that it wasn't quite epic enough. Perhaps to have widened the scope they could have shown reactions back home as they received the message from Riker.

Also recently finished David Brin's *Heaven's Reach*. Some amazing stuff in scale of time, dimensions, distance, the well-drawn sapients and humor. Majestic, wonderful, strange and sometimes very sweet. And he hints in the afterword that he'll return to it some books down the road.

Okay, let's get to the letters ...

First, congrats, Cheree, on SE#50. Thanks for all your efforts. Fun bio's.

Z. P. and Matthew: Good prequel musings. My take — I hope GL does them well enough that we're going to gasp in sudden or growing revelations as we relating 1-3 to 4-6 with various characters/events. That was one of *Babylon 5's* powers — the real changes many of the characters went through and consequences of actions.

As to 4-6 being diminished by 1-3? It may not happen. My first of SW art/stories (way before I found fandom) in fall 83-84 were all about Kenobi, Anakin, other SW characters and my own for the times in Prequel-land. So I think of it as "mine" already. It wasn't until 85-ish that I added post-ROTJ stories.

I kind of hope they'll have some of the flavor of TESB (my over all fave) — cross-currents, complexities, etc. 4-6 becomes the end of the story (since GL said no 7-9), or middle if he changes his mind.

Pat, Lisa, and Marti: Think you said it well on page 30 of SE51. To me, any one saying 1-3 won't be canonish are *so* ... arrogant, isn't quite the word. If GL hadn't created it, "you" wouldn't have it to change. Before "you" get "your" hackles up, I carry around many great alternate SW stories by fan authors in my mind — all happily co-existing. Some are as good as the canon.

Matthew: I've read that puppetry can get away with actions/issues to make a point, that wouldn't be acceptable using human actors. I've never had some one ask me about "little green men", etc., when they found out I read SF.

Belea, et al — net connections: I feel like I'm on Tatooine when it comes to fan communiques. No computer, no email. At least, I get to the library to see web page and read BBS that allow guest access. Like I saw the Prequel banner page Cheree put up in Marketplace before on the Net, otherwise my jaw would've dropped. Loved the way it looks.

SW Artists: Boy, I would have loved to have designed the new EPI ad: Kid Anakin with Vader's shadow. Wow. I'd consider buying that. And I've been salivating over the production sketches and paintings on the web re *Coruscant and Jedi Citadel*. Made me want to draw!

Z.P.: Hi, dere! Thanks for the public kudos. Then, it was one of those windows through humor I could get past my resistances to draw complex stuff.

Debbie: Hi — maybe Philly 2001 Worldcon? I have a chance of getting there, being closer to NYC. Too much *X-Files* is too horror/gory for me, so I watch mostly the over-arching conspiracy stuff. So I fought back queasiness during those late movie scenes, though the caverns were great. The ship/Bermuda triangle especially was cool.

Tim: Never heard of the moon or Phobos stuff.

Tina: How do! Hope the new job for Dan is going well. Hey, you're one of those not totally clubbing Kenobi over the head. I hope GL gives him a great story. Glad you liked the opera sketch. Chinese "Force-tion" cookies? Hee hee hee.

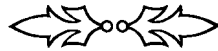
Boy, I'm sighing a little more, not getting to MWC this year with the big doings going on. Raise a glass for those of us with you in spirit.

But I made it for one day to Worldcon 98. At last my first WC. I was a bit too frazzled with so much to cram in, but I enjoyed it. The actual convention center was neat and easy on the feet — good carpets. I have never actually visited Baltimore so I loved the Inner Harbor. Some fun panels, beautiful art show.

Take care. Hoping we'll meet in good stead next ish. MTFBWY.



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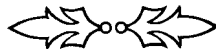
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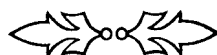


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A TREMOR IN THE FORCE #11. I'm happy to announce that I will be reopening TF #11 for submissions effective June 1, 1999. Having rested a bit and caught my breath, I'm ready to launch into the next issue. TF#11 will be slated for sometime in 2000 (not sure of a date yet until I see what material I get and how my schedule will be). For guidelines, SASE me at Cheree Cargill, 114 Villanova Circle, Forney, TX 75126 USA or email me at FalconPrss@AOL.com.

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THE RETURN OF THE REST OF THE GARBAGE. The next issue will appear in 1999. Contributions are accepted in theory up to October 1998, although if the zine is full, it will close earlier. Straight or slash both welcome, but sex is not mandatory in the stories. Z. P. Florian, 6214 Waterway, Falls Church, VA 22044. Contributions may be e-mailed to me at ZPFlo@AOL.com (ASCII or WordPerfect please).

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