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First, I would like to make belated comments on two topics in #5 which sheer procrastination kept me from answering in time for #6.

As a rabid "Beaver" aficionado, I think it is unlikely that Harrison Ford ever appeared on the program. According to my sources, LEAVE IT TO BEAVER was cancelled at the end of the 1962-63 season, and Ford did not arrive in Hollywood until the summer of 1964. However, many other actors who later made a name for themselves can be spotted in the reruns. Little "Timmy" Matheson plays a friend of Beaver's in one of the early episodes. (No, he didn't offer to show June his "cucumber".) Both Ryan O'Neal and Barbara Parkins appear. And in the infamous "Violet Kisses Beaver" episode, the part of Gwendolyn (Mrs. Fred) Rutherford is played by none other than Majel Barrett. At last I understand the reason behind Mr. Spock's stubborn lack of interest in Nurse Chapel--any woman who could produce an offspring like Lumpy Rutherford would be an extremely illogical choice for marriage.

On the subject of the financial responsibility of zine editors, I tend to take a middle ground. From professional outfits like my book clubs or the Spiegel Catalogue, I expect to get what I ordered or my money refunded--no excuses. But I wouldn't put fanzines in a strictly professional category. If an editor can give me a sufficiently good explanation for her inability to deliver--the printer took all the deposit money and absconded to Venezuela, or the house burned down with all her worldly goods, the cat, and the freshly collated zines in it--then I certainly would be content to forget about my five or ten dollars rather than to force a fellow fan into financial ruin. I'm sure I'm not alone in this feeling.

Now, on to #6: I really enjoyed the articles, especially Judi Grove's account of her adventures during the shooting of WITNESS. But what a disappointment to learn that HF still smokes. Oh, Harry, say it isn't so!

There's so much of interest to comment on in the letters, but I'll have mercy on Cheree's aching fingers and restrain myself to one or two topics.

Sandra Necchi: Having Luke and Leia be merely half-siblings wouldn't necessarily mean that they could not also be twins. All that would be necessary is that the late Mrs. S. would have had to have had intercourse with two different men within the short, critical time period. It has happened in real life--rarely, to be sure, because of the limitations of human biology and sexual mores.

I agree with you, though, in finding the "twins" idea hard to swallow for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that the ANH script describes Luke as being two years older than Leia. No wonder their mother looked "sad" and died young. A labor that lasted two years must have been traumatic, to say the least.

I must disagree with you that the term "terrorist" is purely one of propaganda. True, war often necessitates acts that are morally questionable--dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is a good example. But I submit that there is a difference between conventional and guerilla warfare tactics such as destroying a munitions factory, blowing up a bridge, or even, God forbid, assassinating a key government leader, and acts of terrorism (as least as I define them) such as setting off a bomb in a crowded pub, hiring hit men to open fire in a Tel Aviv airport terminal, and kidnapping a teenage girl and threatening to kill her unless a compatriot is released from prison. All of the above might involve loss of civilian life, but the former at least have strategic purpose, while the latter was merely emotional blackmail--do things our way, or we will take revenge on innocent third parties. Leaving the justice of the individual causes aside, I don't need to be influenced by what my government tells me; the acts speak for themselves.

Why not start a political discussion in a letterzine? (As long as we keep things civil, of course.) SF has always been used as a means of examining moral issues and problems in our own society. That goes for SW fiction as well. It certainly

could be a fascinating basis for a story: what would the Alliance do if faced with an agonizing moral decision akin to that of dropping the bomb on Hiroshima? And how would they deal with an overzealous member committing acts that go beyond the pale?

((Editor's note: Why not discuss politics (or religion, for that matter) in a letterzine? Because Your Editor is not a well person, gentlebeings. Her hair positively curls at the very thought of getting another row going such as is just starting to be settled. Having come within a hair's-breadth of calling it quits because things got out of hand, I would really prefer it if such volatile subjects were largely confined to private correspondence.))

Jedi & The Force

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I found the latest issue of SE very interesting...with the exception of the picture of Annie Wortham with her--uh--hat (which she claims to have gotten at the circus one weekend in Dallas); the layout is better than ever. By the way, no amount of bribes could entice the circus to keep Annie. What most people don't know is that her antennae are real; I've personally seen them. She is actually the illegitimate love child of Martin the Martian.

Frankly, Cheree, I'm quite surprised at your sudden tendency to hog the show. You neglected (in the telling of your elbow's starring role with Michael York) to mention that I was featured as an indistinguishable red blur in THREE establishing shots with him in the same classic movie! Hmph, and so there!

Tim Blaes: Well, my experiences in ST fandom were not good ones. I didn't LoC letterzines or zines (that I can remember), but nevertheless suffered the wrath of a lot of strange peo-

ple. My comments were aimed at my situation. Consider yourself very lucky if you haven't experienced it first-hand in ST (or any other) fandom. Cheree went through it with me and knows exactly what I'm talking about. We both reached our saturation points and felt that enough was enough. Hope you never get hit by it the way we were.

On another note, Tim, when I was in film school, there was a guy who was making a film called KILLER DILLO, about a rampaging giant man-eating armadillo who takes revenge on all Texans who ever mowed down one of its kin on our highways (this was long before the days of the Lone Star Beer giant armadillo commercials, if you're familiar with them). Alas, he dropped out before finishing that project. He DID, however, make a spoof of Japanese horror movies and filmed a trailer for GODZILLA VS. THE ROMULAKS (remember that one, Cheree?). ((Ed: How could I forget it?)) I'd give a lot to have a work print of that one! It was so bad (intentionally) it was good. The director used Japanese students in the roles, along with the token American; the special effects were akin to those in HARDWARE WARS--hand-scratched onto the emulsion of each frame --and Godzilla himself was a hand-puppet lurking through trees (or, rather, azalea bushes). It was wonderfully hilarious; you'd have loved it. There ain't nothing like student film festivals!

B.J. Evans & Michelle Malkin: Kudos to you both! I've often wondered why so many can't accept Han just as he was originally presented in ANH--as a mercenary space pirate and not a user of the Force. Why does he have to be? Part of the inherent appeal and romance of the Han character is that he doesn't NEED the Force "gimmicks" to get along in his universe--he has his on inimitable style and talents (no comments there, Martie!) which suffice him just fine. The fact that he CAN make it through near-death brushes by the skin of his teeth makes him that much more interesting. It's the differences between Han and Luke and their individual ways of dealing with the same situation that compliment each other so well. What's the purpose of

having two characters if they're exactly the same? Even identical twins aren't wholly identical. Why is the "having" of the Force seemingly equated to character and worth? Who said that the Jedi of the Old Republic were the absolute leaders in society anyway? My impression was that they were a very important PART of the Old Republic, but that not everyone was a Jedi and that each individual played their own important role in the scheme of things.

In ANH, Ben told Luke that the Force was in everyone. That doesn't necessarily mean that everyone has the power or knows how to use it, or is meant to; it might mean that each person has different levels (not social class/caste positions); some might actually be almost non-existent and serve another function and the Jedi knights were the ones in whom the brightest Force talents were showcased. There are those who can sing but not dance and paint and vice versa, ad infinitum. There are those who can't do any of that, but that doesn't mean they're untalented. (For instance, the ability to take apart and put back together an engine without a blueprint is a mind-boggling talent, in my opinion.) It also does not make them lesser people for their lack of these talents. Therefore, if Han isn't a Force-user (or even FORCE-sensitive) it doesn't make him less of a man than Luke. Because Luke has a few of what so many consider "weaknesses" in his transitory, learning stages to becoming a full Jedi, it doesn't make him less of a man. Why can't Han and Luke be accepted simply as two intelligent, talented men who compliment each other but who are vastly diverse? (I wonder if the problem for those particular Han fans is that most of them also seem to view Luke as the "fallen angel"; if Luke is SO awful, then what does that make Han, who was originally touted as the mercenary space pirate?)

This makes Jenni's (Hennig) comments on the Jedi as a race very tenable to me, and something I hadn't really considered before. Out of curiosity, Jenni, are you speaking in more spiritual aspects of being of one race than actual genetics? I realize that all humans are of one species, and yet there are

black, white, brown, etc., skin pigmentations. But, what about Yoda? Do you mean a universal genetic inheritance--regardless of species? If this is the case, then we've only seen one example of Jedi because a race indicates an entire society of individuals with similar habits, characteristics and/or interests. The ones we've seen have all been Jedi knights. Non-knights would, under this assumption, apply their Force-talents elsewhere, such as in being Jedi mechanics, healers, teachers, computer operators, housepersons, businesspersons, etc., etc. Am I off-base here, Jenni, or is that the way you're seeing it (that's the way I interpret your CATALYST series, anyway). Anyone else care to comment on this?

I'm sorry to read that people are so distraught by the "deifications" of Han and/or Luke to that point that they're actually beginning to detest the characters. I guess that's an eventuality of having something forced on you continually as "fact" rather than "possibility". (I could tell you stories about a Dallas Cowboys FANATIC I knew ten years ago... well, suffice to say, because of her, I still derive a sadistic sort of glee when they lose a game.) I'm mostly a Han-fan, but I have to admit all the hoopla flying about "bad boy Luke" has really made me take a second look. I've never liked a lily-white hero; I like them a little tinged. Of course, constant association with the nefarious Jenni Hennig and her smutty writing makes Luke look more and more interesting (if you know what I mean, and I think you do). Never expected to hear that from me, did you, Jenni?

I wonder if we're not all missing something here. As has been stated countless times, we have no basis for what we extrapolate a Jedi is/should be. As I see it, neither did Luke. Yoda, Ben & Anakin are all of a previous generation of Jedi. I'd guess that their methods might be somewhat outdated as well. Wouldn't Luke have to really "hunt-and-peck" learn? Yoda taught him basics, but it was left to Luke to implement his knowledge. When you teach a child to walk, there will be a lot of falling on his bottom before he ever gets it right.

Doesn't Luke have the right to make mistakes? He doesn't have any previous real knowledge of the Jedi to draw from and apparent damned little contact with his ethereal friends. Even Luke originally believed Obi Wan to be a legend. This signifies to me the possibility that there may not have been any recorded Jedi history, or that it'd been destroyed by the Empire and denounced as propaganda. Luke, because of his limited training, uses the Force, trusts his feelings and does a lot of guessing concerning how to handle himself in situations (just like in ST, the Vulcans' controlling of emotion is a LEARNED behavior, not inbred). If he makes a big, bad mistake, does that mean that he's fallen from the good side? Let's face it, any given clergyman who has led a good, pure and chaste life, and is totally above reproach, is as capable of killing a child who runs out into traffic as the rest of us. But does that mean he's fallen from the grace of his beliefs? It doesn't even mean he's necessarily made a mistake, especially if the child was hidden from view until the exact moment of impact. Luke is still learning. How many of us can really say we know everything there is to know about one single subject? Luke's got a lot to learn about an infinite abstract concept that he knew virtually nothing of until quite recently in his life. What worked for a Jedi a hundred years ago might not be practical for "today". Certainly, just as our technology outdates us almost daily, I'd think the technology of Luke's universe and time could do no less. This is not to say that the old Jedi methods could not be adapted and revised to work to Luke's advantage. A lightsaber might NOT have been practical in every instance for him and he was not above using a blaster when necessary. Why isn't Luke given an even chance? It's fine for Han to use a lightsaber and immediately be heralded as THE lost Jedi, but if Luke uses a blaster, then he's blaspheming his Jedi heritage! It simply doesn't seem fair, and it doesn't make sense. What's good for the goose...

Melody Corbett: I wonder if each stormtrooper outfit was custom-made for its individual wearer. If this is the case,

it explains why Luke couldn't see well with that helmet--it simply didn't fit ("...aren't you a little short for a stormtrooper?").

I don't quite see the future of the SW universe as being stable or tranquil. The new, improved Death Star was destroyed, along with the "bad guys", but there are still a lot of battles to win. There will undoubtedly be a lot of fringe governors--like Tarkin--who are more than willing to step into Vader's and the Emperor's shoes. The Rebels still have a long road ahead of them.

Maggie Nowakowska brought up some interesting questions concerning Leia's future. I also have trouble imagining Leia happily raising little "Corell Organian Sith Jedi Skywalkers" (or whatever the heck they'd be) and living happily ever after with Han. She was raised a politician--and let's not forget, a rebel--regardless of her genetic heritage. What will she do with it? Perhaps she will be a threat to Mon Mothma, as Maggie suggested, in that her experience has been right in the thick of the battle, not sitting safely behind the laser cannons knitting little blue and pink Jedi afghans. As with all new governments, there is likely to be dissention until the new leaders (whoever they might be) are settled in. Up until now, it's all been hide-and-seek, and there was no real promise of tomorrow. That may still hold true. As stated in the previous paragraph, there will be the "hangers-on" who would like the riches of the Empire returned and will undoubtedly work towards those ends. I wonder if the galaxies wouldn't be full of assassins with death markers for many of the rebel leaders. Not only that, but a lot of Empirical leaders might claim false allegiance to the new government with aspirations to eventually take that over as well and start their own version of the Empire. There will be a lot of paranoid rebels shooting around the stars for a LONG time to come.

Marlene Karkoska: Concerning deathbed confessions, like you, I believe it's possible. A recent serial murderer (at his own admission, of over 350 women) named Henry Lee Lucas has allegedly had quite a startling religious conversion. He is

working hand-in-hand with the police to find the bodies and solve the mysteries (and is doing so quite successfully). Certainly, it doesn't excuse his heinous crimes, but perhaps he is paying some personal penance. ((Ed: It should be noted that Henry Lee Lucas has been already been tried and convicted in a score of these crimes and has received the death sentence and life imprisonments several times over. His conversion has not released him from paying for his crimes.)) A long-time friend of my family who is a clergyman once told me he "never saw an atheist die". If it's a sincere conversion, does it really matter that it's last ditch? Considering your optimistic reasonings for Vader's change-over, I think they're very, very plausible (this doesn't change my original reasoning for not liking Vader's conversion). Like you said, anything's possible!

Bev Clark: The translation of Leia Aquilae is quite interesting, especially since an eagle is also a skywalker of sorts! I'd heard the Japanese "Han-suru"/"-Soro" translations before, and can't help but wonder if that wasn't intentional on GL's part. Did you consider CITIZEN KANE in your list of sources, if for nothing else but the black and white symbolism in the saga, and the overall visual look? Also Sikh theology, with it's rejection of the caste system, and perhaps, on a much broader basis, the Shiite theology for the Jedi knight order. (Could be all very far-fetched, but it occurred to me they could apply.)

I recently found something else you might be interested to research, Bev. I came across a reference to the word "millennium" when I was looking for something else entirely, in which it was listed, in synonym form, right in the middle of other phrases and words some of which follow: flight of fancy; conceit; myth; dream; vision; chimera; chimerical; romance; castles in the air; Utopia; stretch of the imagination; pipedream; imaginer; idealist; romanticist; visionary; romancer; dreamer; enthusiast; rainbow-chaser; tilter at windmills; high-flown; in the clouds; flighty; quixotic; et al. I cross-referenced a few of these, and "chimera", for

instance, refers to "an imaginary monster compounded of incongruous parts; an unrealizable dream". "Chimerical" refers to "existing only as the product of unrestrained imagination; fantastically visionary or improbable; inclined to fantastic schemes or projects". Boy, if that doesn't sound like Han Solo and his ship, I don't know what does! Perhaps in the search for the meaning of MILLENNIUM FALCON this has been overlooked (at least I haven't seen it mentioned before) in favor of the numerical significance. Upon doing a bit of research into falcons and falconing (and I do mean a very little), I found reference to "any of various hawks...with long wings, dark eyes, and a V-shaped projection on the upper mandible which is accommodated by a notch in the lower mandible". (Almost sounds like a description of the ship.) My impression, from the limited information at hand, is that falconers use, more specifically, peregrine females because of their gentler nature. Going from there, the word "peregrine" is also used as an adjective, meaning "having a tendency to wander". To take it further, however, another kind of falcon is a light cannon. Have anything to add, Bev? Anyone? I'm interested! Sure would be nice if GL would compile a dictionary with answers to all this, but, then, there wouldn't be much fun for us, would there?

I haven't kept really active in fandom in the past several years, so I ask this question in hopes I won't get blasted from all quarters as incredibly redundant if it's been asked before but has it occurred to anyone other than myself to wonder why Kenobi had two names? If it was in the novelization of ANH, I don't remember (read it in '77 and not since). Is "Obi Wan" a form of Jedi military address, title or rank? A nickname? Or is it a Jedi-given name? (I don't mean "given name" in the sense of Tom, Dick or Harry, but rather as a sign of attainment of Jedi warrior stature; something like monks and nuns who choose a name other than the name given them at birth.) If so, why doesn't Luke have one (unless there's no one to endow him thusly)? Ben was a general, but I tend to think that title was given to him by the Republican hier-

archy. Maybe you can shed some light for me on this, Bev, since you're also interested in the names in the saga? I'd appreciate it. I know that in ancient Japan "obi" was a belt the Samurai warriors wore in battle, but that's as far as I've had time to take it.

Thanks again for another great issue, Cheree!

Buddhism in SW

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Hello there. Enjoyed issue no. 6 very much. The day with Harrison Ford was fun reading. Yummy...and lucky Judi! Liz Sharpe's article, "A Teleology of Torture" was excellent and I agreed with it in total. I thought it was very clever of Lucas to use the Droid torture to get his message across. The details in analysis on this subject in the article really makes one think about it for a long time after the reading. Very good for the conscience I think.

Sandra Necchi's reviews always make me perk up because she really sinks her teeth into a zine/story and gives a true opinion and analysis without prettying it up. AND without shying away from criticism too. Too many reviewers are afraid of giving REAL analysis or criticism. A shame really. Good constructive criticism helps, not hinders.

Now onto the letters:

Laura R. Virgil: Meant to get back to you much earlier on it but I did not mean anything personal by my comments on Dr. Who (Tom Baker, that is). I just think too many people did not consider what Lucas had in mind with the ending and got a little too heavy with their own opinions on it by implying his interpretation was wrong. One may not like it, but it stands as a valid one that makes sense. I don't care either, if Mr. Baker has a zillion PhD's and has studied as a Monk in the

mountains for 10 earlier life times (reincarnation is my bag!); my own knowledge is no less valuable (neither is yours). Anyway, a letterzine is a place for debating. I LIKE to debate points of view. I really don't think we should chop each others head off over this should we? A bit silly.

I agree with you about Han. I don't think he is an active Force-user, or he'd probably be a Jedi at the end of ROTJ. If everything IS the Force, then the potential for its use (well, one can say HAS the Force...depends on interpretation) can occur with everything that exists whether sentient or not. But as far as the films go, I don't see Han going Jedi (meaning Force-user because I see the name Jedi as synonymous with the term) but if it ever happened, he'd not be afraid of it. Your points are well taken about his actions.

Sally A. Syrjala: A good question that; how powerful are the Jedi and can they use the Force as easily as the Organians in "Errand of Mercy" [STAR TREK] used their powers? I don't think their power can compare because the Organians are evolved persons, who are energy sources, beyond the human realm. I think the Jedi are not incorporated in the energy sources in the same way. They are still people who are human. So I can't see them having the same capabilities.

I didn't like the second RAIDERS film. Too gory with small story and poor characterization. I think the racial aspect is the use of the Indian people. People have so many stereotyped ideas of people who are not like themselves and for someone of Lucas or Spielberg's importance (their films have mass appeal and great impact upon the public), I think they could have done a better job in portraying the Indian people, and their society in general.

Mary Keever: Yes, I received a letter from Shelley Swan, too. Strange indeed.

Sandra Necchi: Your letter left me stunned once more. You are so honest and open and so thoroughly refreshing because of it. Your letters are the highest point in the letterzine because you say what you have to say straight out. A toast to you, Sandra, for having guts and originality. Pinpointing

to Marcia Brin about her common use of stating her opinions as facts (others have also noted this) was welcomed. No one knows how Lucas originally intended SW's as interpretation, other than the simple facts shown by actions and words--just as they are, of his work. So who is Marcia to say she knows what is right or wrong by stating her own opinion as the correct interpretation? I think she owes an apology to all of us who she insults in this manner.

Regarding my article "Buddhism in Star Wars", and the separate Dark and Light powers, I think there are various ways and methods to interpret Dark and Light but all are aspects of the one, the Force. Dark as the fundamental darkness or Dark as emotions are very different aspects of the negative side. I know we tend to think of the negative aspect as BAD but that isn't so in reality. Negative means the opposite of something, not necessarily BAD. Light doesn't necessarily mean GOOD either. That is basic overall interpretation, general in explanation of the Force and its law of opposite powers. The other use of Light and Dark is good and evil which is an aspect of negative/positive in terms of defining death/birth. Death destroys and birth gives life. If one wishes to live in order to evolve then the Light, which represents birth, must sustain the Dark. For without death, birth is not possible. The two are the one. Talking about Light practices, it labels beings who use them as Lightside users. When I was discussing the possibility of Lightside users as separate from Darkside users, it does not mean the users were bad or good, merely using different practices, Darkside users, using the negative side and the Lightside users using the positive side of the Force. Each side would have to have both blended but one side controlling the other. As we see with the Emperor and Darth Vader, they did not control the Light within the Dark, therefore, creating an imbalance. Maybe Darth Vader originally thought he could, who knows? Luke is labeled a Lightside user but in reality he is not, he is just the Force user, balanced with Light and Dark. The Light is prominent because time-

wise life is evolving. (By the time of the Fall of the Republic, Dark and Light were labeled evil and good. But if the Jedi were themselves in anyway responsible for the Fall, or should I say they are anyway in a fashion because there is a division between Dark and Light and there shouldn't be, then they, too, were imbalanced. Therefore, the Light and Dark titles have a very different meaning than Light as positive or Dark as negative by the time we are viewing STAR WARS on screen.) Hope I didn't lose you there, Sandy?

Bev Clark: Thanks for the listing of sources Lucas used. Interesting. I had no idea GUNGA DIN or the FOUNDATION TRILOGY had any influence. Nor John Carter of Mars! ((Ed: I recently saw GUNGA DIN for the first time. Looked more like GUNGA DIN AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM, starring Cary Grant as Harrison Ford! A real hoot to watch!))

Have nothing else to say at this point, other than my zine PERFECT FUSION 1 has been delayed due to my typewriter breaking down. Also got at the last moment some terrific added material which I couldn't say no to. Hoping MediaWestCon for its debut.

Women Fen

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Received SE6 about a week ago and, rather than answer it right away, I decided to give myself awhile to cogitate. I was very glad to see this particular issue and am delighted that you will be continuing the zine. I have to admit to being fascinated by some of the letters in which fen just about begged you to not stop putting out SE, especially the ones from the people who were responsible for having caused the problem to begin with. Either these people just can't see the harm

they almost did (ending the best SW letterzine in current existence) or they finally realized their mistake. I hope it's the latter. Hindsight is better than blindsight.

Liz Sharpe's article on the concept of droid torture was very interesting. After being totally grossed out by this scene in ROTJ the first time I saw it, I started to think about it. In order for the droids to even feel pain, they have to have built in sensitivity and touch sensors. Such sensors may be necessary for certain jobs some droids might perform, but I got the definite feeling that the droids being tortured at Jabba's served only the purpose of Jabba's knowing that such a thing was going on. For another droid to perform such an action on a different droid and to have the torturer actually enjoy what he is doing involves a programming that is the very difficult to think about. It would take a very sick mind to deliberately make a sick droid.

Sharon Saye: One reason why not many people wrote about a fallen Luke after TESB may be that not many people even considered the idea, or if they did, rejected it as probably ridiculous. Of course, any idea may serve as a story idea, even if the writer doesn't agree with it herself. Most likely, as in my own case, the idea was brought up so much in letterzines after ROTJ that many writers considered it and decided to use it for alternate SW stories and vignettes.

Before I forget--as expected my question about why it was all right for Han to scream on the scanner grid but not Luke when he was being fried by the Emperor was not answered. I didn't think it would be. When the subject was originally brought up a year or so back, the idea being dealt with was pain. Luke was berated for not being able to withstand inhuman amounts of pain because he was a Jedi and, supposedly, able to control any and all pain. Then, when most fen objected to such an idea (everyone has to have some kind of pain limit, even Jedi!), the questioners changed their tactic. They started saying that it wasn't Luke's reaction to pain that was being questioned (it wasn't?), but the fact that he begged his father

for help. Their original protest against Luke's screaming in pain was mysteriously dropped like the hot potato it was. My response to their complaint at the time was why was it all right for Han to scream in pain but not Luke. It was never answered. It still hasn't been. I guess it never will be because it can't be. And denying the fact that the question was ever brought up will not change the fact that it was.

Mary Keever: Your letter interested me on several points. I pretty much agree with your response to Martie Benedict. Even more, I have a feeling that Darth Vader had already started thinking of some kind of change once he knew of Luke's existence. He wanted them to rule together as father and son in place of the Emperor and in order to bring some kind of order to a messed up galaxy. It makes me wonder if he originally worked for Palpatine (if that's who the Emperor is) in an attempt to right wrongs. Perhaps this desire was still buried in him in the part that was still Anakin. I also agree with you about Leia probably being an unconscious Force-user. In ANH when Leia was shooting across the abyss at a bunch of Stormtroopers, she missed every time. Then, she closed her eyes, took one last shot and BINGO--exit one stormtrooper. As to non-fen reaction to SW or even sf in general. I've been reading sf since I was able to read. For years I was embarrassed to even mention this. Science fiction and fantasy were not the kinds of fiction that anyone, especially girls, admitted to actually enjoying. It took me a long time to get over this self-insulting bias. A lot of the cure, in my own case, had to do with so many women becoming professional f&sf writers. From the looks of the book shelves in my local stores, I'd say that about 50% of current fantasy and science fiction is being written by women--some of whom started out as fen themselves. As to SW fandom, I tell people who smirk that they don't know what they are missing. I show pride in my interest. This usually leaves the smirker a bit stunned, so I take the chance to point out that media fandom is about the only literary fandom where people are helped to develop their natural

writing or art talents. This is something I also take pride in. If the smirker is still smirking, I figure to hell with her or him. They just want to make themselves feel big by making someone else feel little. But the ones whose smirks turn to a look of interest because they have been shown a new way to think about something make me feel even more proud for having stated my case out of pride rather than mumbling like I once did.

Carol Peters: You brought up a good point about the age of the actor who portrayed Anakin not having anything to do with the age of the person being portrayed. And not knowing Anakin's age to begin with really brings this point home. I remember watching the movie "Alexander Hamilton" in which actor George Arliss who looked about sixty played Hamilton in his early twenties! Now that was ridiculous because we knew how old the actor and Hamilton were both supposed to be. In Anakin's case, who knows?

Barbara Tennison: Your idea about Leia having always been an aware and trained Force-sensitive is a dandy one. I hope that someone does write it. It would be a definite twist on all the Han-as-hidden-Jedi stories. (In my universe all of the Big Three are Force-sensitive, but none of them really knows it [except Han who thinks of himself as an 'atrophied' esper] until after ANH for reasons I won't divulge.)

Sandra Necchi: As much as I enjoyed STIII, I do have to agree with you to a degree. The Klingons were extremely one-dimensional. Not a Kang or Kor in the bunch. Not even a weasily Krass. In fact, the only Klingon who showed any promise at all (the surviving one, fortunately,) was the one who was yelled at for thinking of colonization rather than conquest. And even he ended up as the brunt of a 'joke.' As to its lack of ST's original enthusiasm--it's now the 1980's, and true enthusiasm is a rare commodity. The atmosphere is ultra-conservative and that means, fundamentalists' protests to the contrary, that the only thing being worshipped is money. The hell with people. Despite ST's message also to the contrary, some of this can't help but creep in. It's the times. I

don't believe that it will last, but then I'm a starry-eyed liberal optimist. By the way, did you ever notice how sexist the end of "Enterprise Incident" is? I keep hearing how this is a real pro-woman episode. No way! In fact, it's sexist from beginning to end. Playing up to Spock is one thing, but the RomCom is practically drooling all over him the second she sets eyes on him. One more comment (I know, Cheree, this is a SW letterzine; sorry). "My" ST is "Where No Man Has Gone Before" and "Errand of Mercy." Both are about the purest science fiction in the series and my personal favorites. Then again, I raised myself on Olaf Stapledon, so any show about a homo-superior or homo novae is bound to gain my interest. In fact, getting back to SW, the Jedi and other espers are what I'd consider homo-superior--the next step up the evolutionary ladder (see, Cheree, I knew I'd make a connection somewhere along the way.) No wonder I like SW so much!

Hmmm, I see that several people commented on Shelley Swan's letter. I got one of her missives last summer, too. I had a hand-drawn picture of a wild-eyed Luke complete with halo and angel's wings and a very strange 'poem' inside. I didn't write to her, but wonder if anyone who did ever got an answer. I didn't know whether to take the card as a joke or as a cry for help from a very lonely person.

Debbie Gilbert: I started watching "V" again simply because of the lovely presence of one Duncan Regehr. Now I'm told that he'll only be in three episodes. Sigh, well, it was good while it lasted. For a lizard, Charles has the most magnificent chest-mask I've ever seen. (Duncan Regehr is still my number one nominee to portray young Anakin and Darth Vader.) ((Ed: I second the nomination!))

Maggie Nowakowska: I beg to differ. The Millennium Falcon is definitely not the Other. The Space Slug is. Or is the dia noga...or the sarlaac? Hmmm, I'll need some time to ponder on this momentous subject. Wait! I've got it! It was Salacious Crumb!!! The way he was cackling all the time, he must have known something that no one else knew. And, can we be absolutely certain that he died in

that explosion? Think about that!

Jeaning Hennig: Why off Earth would Han teach the MF to say 'ain't' when he hardly ever used the word himself? Nyah! ...Sigh. Well, what more can I expect from a Lu-u-uke fan? Han's English (or Galactic or whatever the heck it was) was pristine and perfect, and don't you forget it. Hmph! (By the way, you and Cheree and Bev Lorenstein and I have to get together at MediaWest*Con. Mi-ghod, Han and Luke fen on each side! Whatever is the world coming to?)

Jean Stevenson: I didn't say the 'cooling' of friendships over disagreements of interpreting the SW saga, I said that friendships were actually ended. If you see Luke as evil and someone else disagrees with you, does that automatically make the other person evil? I know of one person who was told exactly that by a former friend. I do consider that sick. Hmmm, time again--my interpretation of Temple of Doom is inaccurate? My opinion differs from yours, therefore it is inaccurate? There's an algebraic equation in all this, but for the life of me I can't figure it out. But, in the meantime, thanks, Jean, for a new addition to the semantics game. One more thing: SW is a modern fairy-tale in which GL rewrote some of the rules, or so it seems. In this fairy-tale, the son doesn't have to kill the 'evil' father (or father figure) to take his place. In this case, the father who was once good becomes good again, and he dies willingly so that his son might live. I never got the impression that Luke was asking his father to sacrifice himself for him. My impression was that Luke was asking for his help for both their sakes. Luke had no idea that Anakin was going to divert the Emperor's 'death rays' onto himself and cause his own death. Then again, maybe that was Anakin's intent--to return to the Light Side and not have to live to face all the guilt for the evil he had done. It seems to me that Luke wanted Anakin alive, free and on the Light side once more, but he was powerless, in the end, to keep him alive in the face of Anakin's overpowering guilt.

Sandra Blodgett: A Good Mother and a Bad Mother in the

first SW trilogy? Now that really sounds fascinating. All kinds of mythic possibilities in such an idea (the good queen and the wicked witch who takes her place or tries to).

Elsie Bartok: I agree with you that the Jedi were probably some kind of police force (paramilitary), but this doesn't necessarily mean that this was all they were. Master Yoda doesn't exactly strike me as warrior material. Isn't it possible that the Jedi had more than one branch--warriors, teachers, researchers, writers, artists and craftspeople? These are just suggestions, but the Jedi are an interesting subject to delve into. I hope that you and others will go more deeply into the subject in future issues.

Marlene Karkoska: Absolutely loved all four and then some pages of your letter. You covered a lot of territory in a way that was both entertaining and educational. I have a few questions to propose that I hope that you and others will have time to give your opinions on. The first is an idea I've already used in a story (and I believe that someone else did, too, a couple years ago, though differently). Is it possible that some Jedi foresaw the downfall of the Order and the Old Republic but for reasons of their own (not necessarily evil ones) did nothing to prevent it? Is it possible that one of the reasons for the existence of the Jedi was to prevent people such as the Emperor from achieving so much power through use of the Dark Side of the Force by either converting them to the Light Side or destroying them (that is self-defense when you really think about it). Is Force-talent necessary in order to become a Jedi of any kind? Do different Jedi have different Force-talents? Were there espers who were not Jedi? Were the Jedi originally two warring groups--one over-rational in its desire to follow the Light Side and the other over-emotional in its desire for power--that had to combine in order to prevent universal destruction (go to town on that one, writers). If the Emperor was so powerful, why didn't his aura cause a disturbance in the Force that other Jedi would have felt and sought out? Did all the Terran-appearing people in the SW saga

originate from one world once upon a time? (A lot can happen in over 20,000 years of colonizing.) So much for just a 'few' questions.

Chris Callahan: Those who see the Dark and Light Sides of the Force as simple evil versus good are not going to listen to an argument which postulates that Light=logic and Dark=uncontrolled emotion and that the work of a good Jedi is to find a proper balance between the two. Of course, now that I've made such a statement, some fen may feel forced (as it were) to make their own comments. That's fine with me. I'd like to read about as many different interpretations of the Force as there are. Finally, Cheree, I'd like to thank you for all the kind words about KESSEL RUN 4. You know they were appreciated.

Luke's Good Points

Marlene Karkoska
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January 22, 1985

I'm very glad that you have decided to continue to publish SE. Thank you for continuing to give us the opportunity to share our ideas and comments. I'll try to control my runaway pen and not take up more than my share of your letterzine!

Sandra Necchi suggested in SE#5 that we talk about how nice Luke is instead of trying to defend him against unfair accusations, because no defense is necessary anyway. I mentioned a number of Luke's positive attributes in SE#4, but I think Luke has many other good qualities as well. I'm going to limit myself to only one: Luke's unselfishness.

From the beginning, Luke showed that he thought of others and put their needs and desires before his own. Although Luke desperately wanted to attend the Academy, and although he was certainly old enough to make his own decisions and be on his own, he stayed and

helped his aunt and uncle on the farm. Like many young people, he aired his feelings about the situation, but he didn't refuse to stay. He could have simply left, but he cared enough for his guardians that he stayed on Tatooine despite his unhappiness. In ANH, Luke put the welfare of others before his own safety when he endangered his life to rescue the Princess and battled the Death Star to protect the Rebel base.

Although becoming a Jedi Knight was of primary importance to Luke, in TESB he put aside his own personal goal of Knighthood temporarily, and left his training and the safety of Dagobah to try to help his friends who were in immediate danger in Cloud City. He showed that the lives of others were more important to him than his desire to be a Jedi.

A self-centered, egotistic person would have grabbed at the chance to rule the Galaxy. I think that Luke's ultimate act came when he refused to join his father in Darkness and jumped from the gantry on Bespin to avoid becoming an instrument of evil. In that act, he was offering his life for the benefit of the Galaxy. He was willing to sacrifice himself rather than to give in to his Father's temptations.

In ROTJ, Luke proved his unselfishness again when he led Han's rescue mission. At the time, Luke was still unaware that Leia was his sister. It is generally assumed that he loved the Princess and it must have crossed his mind that if Han never returned, there was a good chance that Leia might turn to him eventually. Luke could have chosen not to go rescue Han. He even had a good excuse: he could have said he needed to return to Dagobah. But Luke was unselfish and thought about the needs and wants of Han and Leia and showed his love for them. Skywalker not only went along to help in Han's rescue, he planned and led the rescue effort, and was ultimately responsible for Solo's safe return.

If Luke was a selfish person, he would have left Endor and run away from Vader as Leia suggested. Instead, he risked his life to face his father as his mentors said he must. Then he tried to return Vader, a man whom he had every reason to hate

back to the good side of the Force. He was again showing caring and concern for another, as well as extraordinary forgiveness.

If Luke had been egocentric and concerned only with himself and his own welfare, he would have made a beeline for the nearest exit the second the Emperor died on Death Star II, and wouldn't have given a single thought to Vader or anything or anyone else. Instead, Luke risked his own safe escape from the Death Star by carrying his dying father with him to the shuttle, which slowed him considerably and caused him to lose precious minutes which could very well have been the difference between life and death. Even after Vader's death, Luke still took the extra time necessary to get his father's remains aboard the Imperial craft.

Through these actions and many others throughout the saga, Luke demonstrated his unselfishness by placing the safety, needs and wants of others, ahead of his own.

Marcia Brin: You asked, "Who was Darth Vader following in TESB when he followed the Falcon?" I think maybe Darth Vader wasn't following a person at all, but was simply following a "Force aura" because perhaps a person doesn't develop a "Force aura" until after he or she has had considerable training in the Force, or, as others have suggested, unless he or she is actively using the Force. (Luke was actively using the Force in the Death Star trench in ANH when Vader said, "The Force is strong in this one.") Since Darth Vader knew that Luke had not received much training before Ben's death, he didn't expect to feel Skywalker's "aura" through the Force. So, perhaps Vader decided to follow the Falcon because he recognized it as the ship in which Luke and his friends had escaped from the Death Star, and which had sent him spinning off into space at the end of ANH. Darth Vader knew that Luke Skywalker was with the Rebel Forces on Hoth, but he probably didn't know exactly where Luke was, so he followed the Falcon, because of all the ships leaving Hoth, the Falcon was the most logical one to pursue. He knew that it belonged to Luke's friends, so

there was a possibility that Skywalker might be aboard. However, even if he found that his son was not aboard the Falcon when he captured the ship, he would still have the Falcon's crew--Luke's friends--for bait, so that he could trap young Skywalker. Either way, he could obtain his quarry. He probably figured that if Luke was aboard the Falcon--wonderful! If he wasn't, it would just take a little longer to have Skywalker in his possession. As Lando said, "Vader's set a trap," and as Leia replied, "And we're the bait!"

You also asked, "When the Emperor feels a great disturbance in the Force, who is he feeling?" You eliminated Luke because, "...he is on Dagobah which must be shielded, since the Emperor cannot read Yoda, who is more powerful than Luke." I don't think that we can arbitrarily make such a broad statement. Just because the Emperor can't "read Yoda," doesn't necessarily mean that Dagobah is shielded. Yoda may have been able to shield his own presence from the Emperor, but perhaps he didn't have the power to shield Luke and the entire planet of Dagobah as well. Personally, I think that the Emperor was feeling Luke when he felt "a great disturbance in the Force."

Marcia, you asked, "If these stories are for ten-year olds, what are we doing here? Why have we wasted years on something geared to young children?" George Lucas did write the stories for children. He said so a number of times. If they are also fun for adults, so much the better. I think part of the reason that the STAR WARS movies are so popular with adults is that they stretch the imagination, and they appeal to the child in all of us, the part of us that retains that sense of wonder, joy, and excitement in new discoveries and experiences. I am not embarrassed to admit that there's still something of the child left in me. I think the child in us helps us remain optimistic and idealistic in a difficult world, and is responsible for much of our joy, laughter, and love of life. I don't know about you, but I read SW fanzines and letterzines because I enjoy reading them. However, SW is not my whole life nor my

only interest, so it takes up only a very small fraction of my time.

Jean Stevenson: The sacrifice to which you referred in your last letter: "...the last time I heard, 'Father, help me please!' in a story, it was followed by 'not my will, but Thine be done,' and the sacrifice still had to be allowed by a loving Father."), had a purpose--the Salvation of all mankind. The sacrifice of Luke's life would have served NO useful purpose. If Luke would have died, Vader and the Emperor would probably have gotten off of Death Star II safely. (With Luke no longer alive to occupy their attention, they would have probably realized that the shield generator had been destroyed and would have fled the Death Star.) With Luke's death, the Jedi would also have become extinct, the Alliance would have lost a good commander, and Han and Leia would have been saddened by a deep sense of loss of a best friend and new-found brother. At the point in question, Luke had already made his big choice: he had chosen the light over the dark, so it was not as though he needed to sacrifice himself in order to avoid becoming an instrument of evil. He had already rejected the Emperor's offer, he was now officially a Lightside Jedi Knight. I can't think of one good consequence that would have come from Skywalker's death at the Emperor's hands. What would have been gained if Luke had quietly allowed the Emperor to kill him? It would have been senseless for Luke to die for nothing. Only bad consequences would have resulted if Luke would have silently sacrificed his life, whereas a very good consequence resulted from the sacrifice to which you referred, so I don't really think your example puts Luke in a bad light at all.

Laura Virgil: I enjoyed your letter. I agree that one of the safest places to hide someone or something is in "plain sight." It was a very effective way to hide Leia by putting her out in the open and keeping her Force talents dormant so that she wouldn't be recognized by evil Force users.

I also agree that if Vader had met his son before Ben started to train Luke, he prob-

ably wouldn't have picked up any Force talent in him. Vader didn't feel the Force in Leia when he interrogated her, so as I said earlier (and as others have also said), it's very possible that one either needs to be actively using the Force or needs to have completed considerable training in the Force, before his or her presence can be detected through the Force, Luke didn't demonstrate any special Force talent or powers until Ben started to teach him. It seems that inheriting the Force is not enough, one still needs to be trained in order to use it, and even to be recognized as having it all.

As to how Vader discovered that he was Luke's father (he didn't seem to know that he had fathered twins until the end of ROTJ, because he seemed genuinely surprised to find out on Death Star II that Luke had a sister), it is possible that someone else may have told him (perhaps Palpatine as you suggested) or maybe he just began to put a lot of things together after the destruction of the first Death Star. I'm sure that finding the identities of the two men responsible for the rescue of Princess Leia and the Death Star plans, and of the Rebel pilot who had destroyed the Empire's deadly toy and the freighter pilot who spoiled Vader's fun over the Death Star, was a top priority goal for the Imperials and especially for Vader. The Empire probably didn't hesitate to torture some poor, hapless, captured Rebel to obtain such information. It probably didn't take them long to learn Luke's name and check into his background. Vader was never portrayed as a stupid character, so he probably considered it much more than a coincidence that a 20 year old by the name of Skywalker would just happen to be aboard the first Death Star at the same time Ben Kenobi was there. Add to that the fact that Vader felt evidence of Force talent in Luke as young Skywalker used the Force in the Death star trench, and probably other clues that we are as yet unaware, such as the fact that Vader probably knew or was related to Owen Lars (who was Luke's guardian), for example, and Vader could have discovered his relationship to Luke himself.

Elsie Bartok: In the nov-

elization, p. 117, during the conversation between Luke and Leia on the walkway, Luke asked Leia, "Do you remember your mother? Your real mother?" She answered, "Yes, just a little bit. She died when I was very young." Similar lines were also in the film, if I remember correctly. It was implied in the novelization that Bail Organa is not Leia's real father: "She'd always felt so close to her adopted parents, it was if they were her real parents. She almost never thought of her real mother--that was like a dream.

Barbara Brayton & Pam Lavasseur: You're right about Mr. Marquand reading all nine stories. There are nine stories now. However, the point I was trying to make was that the original story consisted of 6 stories, 2 trilogies, and that ROTJ was originally to be the concluding episode. However, after ANH came out and was so tremendously successful, George Lucas wrote another trilogy. Lucas said, "After the success of 'Star Wars,' I added another trilogy, but stopped there, primarily because reality took over. After all, it takes three years to prepare and make 'Star Wars' picture. How many years are left?"

Sandra Necchi & Melody Corbett: Although I think we're probably all in agreement that George Lucas simply changed his mind when he decided on a twinship for Luke and Leia, my pen pal came up with what I think is a very clever "explanation" for the difference in the ages of Luke and Leia. She said, "...the simple explanation could be that Leia was raised on Alderaan, and is accustomed to telling her age in Alderaani years, and Alderaan has a longer year than Tatooine. Say, for example, that Alderaan's year was two months longer than Tatooine's year. The two babies, at the end of their first planetary year, would no longer be the same age in planetary terms. Leia, on Alderaan, would have been one year old. Luke, on Tatooine, would have been one year and two months old. However, by actual time, they would have existed for exactly the same amount of time. So, while in some form of artificial 'standard' time Leia and Luke would be the same age, by local planetary time, there would be a difference." Isn't that an

ingenious idea? I loved it! Of course, George Lucas could probably also say that the ages of Luke and Leia are never stated in any of the films, and only the films themselves should be taken as canon.

Well, I have lots more to say (as usual!), but I know that Cheree will be upset (and rightfully so!) if I take up any more space in her letter-zine, so I'll control the urge to continue writing. My LoC is probably still longer than anyone else's! SORRY!

Cheap Products

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January 19, 1985

Greetings, Earth-People!

I'll open up with a bit of news. ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT said that we can expect two Saturday morning cartoons in the near future, DROIDS starring R2D2 and C3PO, and EWOKS featuring those Chip 'n Dale abominations that pass as Ewoks. They only showed a snip of each, but the animation looks good. What I'd like to see would be a Young Princess Leia cartoon show. Marvel Comics is also publishing an Ewok comic.

It was quite a birthday present Lucas gave me, in the form of THE EWOK ADVENTURE. I liked it. It was a damn sight better than the SW HOLIDAY SPECIAL. But this time I think he aimed a little too much at the kiddie audience. And it didn't seem to be a part of the same "reality"; there was too much outright magic, with picture-tops, boy-eating ponds, and stones that turn into mice and lizards. They used the same Ewok characters (Wicket, Tebo, Logray, etc.) but they lived on the ground instead of the trees. I suppose they moved from the "Suburbs" to the "Big City." The acting wasn't too hot, especially the parents, and the dreaded "Gorax", or whatever that giant's name was, reminded me of a giant I've seen in an old Little Rascals episode.

Despite various misgivings, I did enjoy it very much, and I do hope they try something like this again. In fact, I wish they'd tried doing this a long time ago.

B. J. Evans: Perhaps we should define the difference between a Force-User and a Force-Sensitive. A Force-Sensitive is a person with heightened perceptions. They would be able to sense other peoples' emotions and/or thoughts, be extremely aware of their surroundings, and possibly be clairvoyant. But a Force-User can manipulate his or her environment. They would be able to influence other peoples' thoughts and emotions, move or alter their surroundings, and not just see one possible future, but many. Han could very well be a Force-Sensitive, but it's less likely that he is a Force-User.

A story that portrays a white man helping out non-white people is racist? Why? Indiana Jones seemed to have considerable respect for those people, and they did need help.

Part of the problem with the SW movies is that there are so few women to be seen, even peripherally. This is why I think Wedge Antilles should have been a girl. With nothing else different "she" would have made the SW universe seem a little less segregated by sex.

I don't think that the SW toys are of the best quality, at least not for the price they charge; \$3 to \$5 for a 2" Jawa figure that probably cost less than 35¢ of cheap cloth and plastic. I don't like the mentality behind them, but the new G.I. Joe figures are better made and better articulated.

Lucas has gone on record somewhere, saying he wouldn't use STAR WARS to endorse a sugary breakfast cereal, because he felt they were bad for kids. Here's hoping that George chokes on his C3PO's. And in an article on the licensing of SW, in NEWSWEEK, I think, a LFL spokesperson said that someone had applied for the rights to do an R2D2 whisky flask but they were turned down because it was thought to be in poor taste. (Hey, if it was good enough for Mickey Mouse...) But I have been informed that not only is there now an R2D2 whisky flask, but there is also one of C3PO and Darth Vader. Look, I

don't mind that merchandising, but I do demand quality and a reasonable price. When the ROTJ Glow-In-The-Dark Erasers don't glow in the dark or erase very well, then you know things have gone too far.

Mary Keever: The manager at the cafeteria where I work told me she saw and liked E.T., and she seemed almost embarrassed about it. She was almost whispering. But she isn't as bad as my father. I always knew he was 99 and 44/100% mundane before the last time I saw him (he hates cats, comic books and all SF) but I never expected him to get worse! I saw him for the first time in seven years this Christmas, only to find out he is a card carrying member of the Moral Majority. I told them about my killer cookie jar story that I'm working on, and they were stunned. My step-mother asked me why I didn't write about "nice things...like 'Little House on the Prairie?'" She is also convinced that the Dungeons & Dragons game and the He-Man cartoon show are Satanic plots. It would be funny if they weren't my own family.

Carole Regine: If you think The Sex Pistols and Tortured Puppies are gross, you should have seen the third group I mentioned that Cheree didn't print. It was so crass that I spent two hours looking through my old FUTURE LIFE magazines just to make sure that they actually existed, only to have her edit it out, undoubtedly on the grounds that it was racist. ((Ed: Can't remember exactly what it was but it was something on the order of Niggers in Chains, something I felt was completely outside the bounds of even bad taste.)) This reminds me about something else I read in FUTURE LIFE. They featured quite a few articles on New Wave rock bands. Some European group, German I think, was disappointed with the soundtrack to STAR WARS. Symphony music?? They've got to be kidding, they said. A "futuristic" movie like SW needed only one type of music; New Wave, not any of that old-fashioned, fuddy-duddy orchestra stuff.

When I listen to music I can't help but visualize it in my mind. I still feel that the right song with the right film clips could produce a dandy trailer that wouldn't conflict with Williams' work. I wouldn't

eliminate any type of music as totally inappropriate for such a purpose. If one of the Networks were to be struck with an uncharacteristic fit of intelligence and produce a mini-series on the conquering of the Solar System, then I would like to see them use mostly country and folk music. Example: an asteroid prospector shown playing "Take Me Home, Country Road" in his one man survey ship, or "The City of New Orleans" heard over a ship docking with an O'Neill type space colony.

Sandra Necchi: It is indeed true that not all Han-fans are members of the Church of Ford or subscribers of the "evil Luke" doctrine. A friend of mine named Susan is a rabid Han-Fan, but she has nothing against Luke. I've been tempted to smack her upside of the head when she occasionally refers to Luke as a "wimp", but I suspect that she's just thinking about their physiques when she says that. I told her about the "evil Luke" doctrine, and how Luke supposedly succumbed to he Dark Side, that Lucas doesn't like him, and that Luke couldn't tie his shoelaces without help from Han. She was struck incredulous, unable to understand this phenomenon.

Regarding your comments about terrorism. Are you saying that the ends justify the means? What did it accomplish when the farms of neutrals were burned during the American Revolution? I was unaware of this, but I refuse to condone it, as it accomplished nothing but destruction. I'm not inclined to be sympathetic to any group or person who sets off a bomb in a shopping center, no matter what cause they espouse, even if I support that cause. Desperation is hardly an excuse for random slaughter. You may glamorize terrorists as "freedom fighters" if you wish. Some of them may be just that. But why is it that so many revolutions sour into totalitarian establishments?

If the Soviets haven't been able to stamp out organized religion, it hasn't been for lack of trying. If you want to talk about propaganda, then we can talk about Billy Graham; how do you know what went on after he left? And I wouldn't slam American journalists if I were you. They're not exactly cuddly with the present administration (thank God) and they

just love to take jabs at the government. It is because of our news media that we supported the revolutionaries in El Salvador, at least until they started screwing with the elections.

I'm not an idealist. Some ends justify some means. And I know war is Hell. But if Luke, Leia or Han started harrassment against neutrals, blowing up public transports or killing civilian hostages, then they might lose the support of the people they proclaim to be fighting for.

In the X-Men there is an interesting relationship between Kirt Wagner and Logan, a/k/a Nightcrawler and Wolverine. They disagree on so many things, but they'd both die for the other if they had to. Kirt, despite his demonic appearance, is a devout Catholic, Logan an atheist. One particular conversation occurred in issue #140. Nightcrawler was somewhat appalled at Wolverine's violence in dealing with a particular adversary. Kirt felt that killing was wrong, no matter what. Part of Logan's reply was, "A man comes at me with his fists, I'll meet him with his fists. But if he pulls a gun--or threatens people I'm protectin'--then I got no sympathy for him. He made his choice. He'll have to live--or die--with it." And Kirt responds, "I understand, Logan. What you say is reasonable, logical, justifiable. But does that make it right?" I seldom totally agree with either of them.

Many life forms do peculiar things when confronted with unsolvable dilemmas or excessive stress, humans included. "I know" is not the most tactful reply, agreed, but it wasn't said in a cocky or hurtful manner. It just may have been the only response that he could muster.

I am deeply shocked that any letterzine would tell Sandra to "go away, we don't want you to play with us anymore." Very childish, not to mention distressingly clique-ish. What are letterzines for? An exchange of varied and occasionally conflicting ideas, or a clearing house for mutual admiration societies? This particular l-z editor had better re-examine her ethics.

I haven't yet felt like giving up on "V", but the show has steadily deteriorated. Visi-

tor Shocktroops must have taken shooting lessons from Stormtroopers, or maybe the A-Team. Diana missed Donovan when he was standing still at near point-blank range. Elias had to do something incredibly stupid like run out into the open before they could blow him away with a special-effect. I remember in STARLOG Garner Simmons said something like, "A single laser blast costs \$600, but we have to have the zap-guns or it won't be as exciting." Oh, lawsey, lawsey, lawsey!!! Won't they ever learn? So much of what drew me into "V" has been eliminated or replaced with mediocre pap. Elizabeth was one of my favorite characters; she ain't no more. Ham and Willy were bright spots in unimaginative scripts, but Ham has left the scene and they almost bumped off Willy. I'm not sure where the show is going anymore. As far as I'm concerned, Blat & Singer and Garner Simmons can shove it up their Prae-ta-nama. I'll stick with the novels. They are showing imagination and integrity.

Debbie Gilbert: I think Gremlins are cute! A poster of Stripe kept my crazy grandmother out of my room, to which I'm entirely grateful. As for the marketing, keep in mind that young children also want toys with Godzilla, Frankenstein and the Wolfman featured on them. Spielberg knows that monsters are fun.

(I'm afraid there's another typo in my last letter. I wrote "Han vs. Luke at its worst has nothing on even the mildest K/S debates". You dropped the K/S from the sentence. ((Ed: Whoops! Sorry!)) I understand that you were quite rushed, however, so no big deal.)

A few comments on some movies; I saw THE LAST STARFIGHTER and ROMANCING THE STONE together at a drive-in. STARFIGHTER was better than I thought it would be, and that was a TRON-ish videogame exploitation flic. The plot and characters were quite interesting, though the drive-in didn't do those excellent computer graphics any justice. ROMANCING THE STONE was also quite enjoyable. I only wish that little sociopath with the bolas had stayed in the plot long enough to have been blown away or eaten by an alligator. I did not like that kid.

I've seen the movie and then

read the book of 2010: THE YEAR WE MAKE CONTACT. The movie was the better telling of the story, I think, but the book has all sorts of interesting things they couldn't pack into the movie. I do wish all the reviewers and critics would stop griping that it's not the landmark 2001 was, and otherwise making undue comparisons between the two films.

I enjoyed STARMAN, despite an ad campaign that presented it as a cross between E.T. and a Harlequin Romance. That'd be accurate enough, if you include MORK & MINDY and THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL. It seems as if all aliens who visit our planet do at least two things: they take up earthly vices (drinking, gambling) and watch romantic movies on our television.

RUNAWAY was one of the most entertaining of the movies I've seen this year. Three cheers for Michael Crichton! Not to mention Tom Selleck, Cynthia Rhodes, Gene Simmons, Kirstie Alley and whoever made those robots. Sure, there are a few (small) gaps in credibility, but Crichton said he wanted to make a "popcorn movie," and by golly he did! Now, I wonder where I could get a couple of those spider-seekers.

When I listed all the other people who have contributed to the SW movies, directors, actors, etc., I forgot to mention Leigh Brackett (shame on me!). I can't help but speculate how TESB would have turned out if she could have finished it.

Sally Smith: Why is media fandom dominated by the XX chromosome? No single reason, I think. There are some differences between men and women, I'm sure, but that can't account for all of it. There are also economic factors. One friend of mine isn't as involved in active fandom as he once was because he now has a family to support. There is also the imprecise, but not entirely unjustified impression that some male SF fans have of media fen being just a bunch of women obsessed with the male actors.

Marcia Brin: Mighty arrogant of you to conclude that either you are right or Lucas is a jerk. I suspect the latter, in any case. I tried to look up that Spielberg quote to check its context, but you must be working from the hardback

edition because I couldn't find it on that page in the paperback. Spielberg is welcome to his opinion, and I'm just as welcome to take it with a grain of salt. TEMPLE OF DOOM, whatever virtues it might have, was not very consistent. I would also take issue with the statement that TV is immoral, rather than it is amoral; taking a stand on any issue is anathema to the task of selling diet drinks, mouthwash and underarm deodorant.

Is SW a "we" story or an "I" story? More importantly, is it Ying or is it Yang? Animus or Anima?! Is it an Apple or an Orange?! Yeah, verily! If these and other questions are not answered soon, fandom will surely spin itself into the dust, never to be seen again.

You missed the point of the birthday party analogy. It is precisely the point that it was a life-and-death situation. That's not the time to take chances. Niceness is not a virtue when planning a covert action.

With the exception of Against the Sith, I don't remember any zines that had Leia "swooning over how wonderful, noble, generous, good, kind Luke and how (Leia) could never be worthy of him." In those early days of SW fandom we were drawing on two hours of movie to do what ST fandom was doing with seventy or so hours of TV. Back then, Leia was a bitch, Luke a hick kid, and Han your basic stud/redneck. (Oh, and please be careful how you sling that word "wimp" around.) You would take the true climax of the film, the moment Luke realizes he is about to make a big mistake, and twist it into some sort of selfish act. You have been asked this before, I ask it again: if Luke Skywalker did absolutely nothing right, then what should he have done instead?

The Emperor does indeed identify the disturbance in the Force as male. He also identifies it as "the son of Skywalker." Are you saying Han is Luke's brother? And Vader may not be homing in on anyone's Force abilities. He may simply be working under the assumption, perhaps devined through the Force, that if he has the Palcon, Luke will be soon to follow. If that was his assumption, he was correct.

I've done my best to keep things light, to introduce potential subjects of discussion, I've even been a bit silly now and then (there's something about SE that inspires the crass eccentric in me). And Lord knows I'm not one to ignore this blasted Han vs. Luke crap. I have this unfortunate tendency to not ignore cheap-shots and irrelevancy, you understand. But somehow the subject does not seem important enough to warrant entire LOCs on it and it alone. Can't we talk about anything else?

Hi Yo Silver Away....

On Second Thought

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One thing about Han Solo: he's not easy to stay mad at. Having just viewed TESB after four years (and I'd only seen it twice then) I've had a chance to finally watch my favorite SW film since having joined the discussion in the letterzines in late '83, which was when I first began actually thinking about the SW universe. This very special viewing (on a friend's VCR) gave me the opportunity to observe all the characters even more carefully, and my admiration for Kershner has doubled, but my appreciation of the acting by the three principals, and Mayhew, has increased even more. Each managed to convey such powerful emotions in just a look or two. And, again, Han's part in the film made me more sympathetic to him, more than I ever have been in the past. I watched closely the scenes between him and Leia and I really saw for the first time the depth of struggle these two people are undergoing and I can no longer judge Han harshly. I do not believe either was "wrong"--I simply can't bring myself to judge them (the same goes for Luke). So the last part of my LoC from last issue is a tirade expressing past feelings based on skewed memories of a film that had dimmed in clarity over the years, and also based on annoyance of recent fan deifica-

tion of the character. Those of you who have a VCR probably cannot fully appreciate all this. It was like seeing the film for the first time, only with a much clearer mind-set. Would that GL had given his characters as much freedom and dignity in ROTJ as Kershner did in TESB! Then the SW saga would have, in my mind, reached its true potential. Sorry to sound so gushy. I usually complain about such sentimentality, and here I am committing the same sin. I just can't convey in words the impact this film has on me. To those who reject the notion that Han and Leia can't have a fulfilling marriage, my third viewing of the film has put me on your side. I see some problems arising between them but nothing insurmountable. It is a mistake to impose our own society's limited definition of marriage on the world of SW, and I will do it no more. And it is certainly heartening to hear good examples in fandom itself of marriage that restricts neither partner's potential.

Liz Sharpe: What a wonderful, extremely well-written, intelligent article! (I think you deserve the title of Most Logical Writer hands down!) As one who initially balked at the droid torture scene in ROTJ, I was at first skeptical about your attempt to justify it, but as I continued to read the article further and further, you convinced me! But if we take the argument into the realm of practicality, I have to ask this question: WHY make droids that can feel pain? Why would the Empire or Alliance or any one else manufacture/purchase droids that feel pain? I would think it would be a large handicap in terms of extracting information about one's enemies. Also, you neglect a third reason (and the most practical) for torture: getting information. Torture is usually a messy, time-consuming, expensive business (anyone interested in hearing the gruesome figures for torture and torture-training budgets for governments around the world, including the U.S.?). Doing it just for sadism probably occurs much less frequently than for getting information, although your second reason--punishment--probably occurs just as often.

Laura Virgil: I liked your

refutation of Han the Force-user, in reference to shooting the Sarlaac. I think the argument denigrates Han's abilities. I prefer to think he has learned these skills because he's naturally talented, not just because he's got the Force. All the examples of Han's Force usage have always seemed to me to be wild exaggerations. So he's a great mechanic (this gets translated into "mechanical genius") and pilot. Since ANY pilot can fly through an asteroid field (asteroids being light years apart) I can't take that one seriously. Any argument based on bad science is based on nothing. Barbara Brayton and P. J. LaVasseur refute the "Blind Han" theory pretty well too. Again, it's a denigration of Han's intelligence. I don't think he'd be so irresponsible as to take on such a crucial mission (as leader yet) with a handicap he can't control. Besides, his gaze is very steady and direct during the briefing.

Mickey Malkin: You mention that Luke got the same sort of deification that Han is getting now. I wasn't around to see it. Perhaps if I had been, I would be much less of a "Luke defender" now. Since I think you're one of the fairest, most rational people in SW fandom today, I'll ask you and take your word for it: was the Luke-worship you allude to as gushy and as extreme as the current spate of obsessive "Han-ism"? And was it accompanied with a truly virulent attack on Han? If so, I'm glad I wasn't around to see it. Fanaticism over one character is quite enough to witness, thank you. Yes, Mickey, you were quite right: I was blunt. If I think an idea is extreme, I'll say so. Tim Blaes said it so well: "Those who whine 'personal attack' are very often people who cannot withstand a direct challenge to any of their opinions." Tim and I seem to have no qualms about calling them as we see them. My opinions have been excoriated and ridiculed many times already and not once have I cried "personal attack". And even if someone DID say "Sandra Necchi's brains are full of mush" or "Necchi, you're an idiot", not one peep of protest would you get from me. Although you might get some sarcasm. I also find it rather funny that those who've taken up the "per-

sonal attack" defense are the very same people who've done nothing but assassinate the (fictional) person of a character.

About this Shelley Swan letter--I thought it was a satirical put-on. That's why I liked it. But now Debbie Gilbert implies this person is serious. HUH?

Janine Hennig: Your LoC was just a pure joy to read! You and Chris Callahan alluded to the same sort of thing. You mentioned a point Anne Zeek made once (I think she put in a story) about what might have happened to Luke if he HADN'T gone to rescue his friends, and Chris refers to the evils of pure reason. Jedi he might have become, but not a very human one. One of the greatest flaws in the whole argument is the separation of personal motivations and drives from the larger political/moral issues. I've said this before: the personal and the political are very often one and the same, especially in a rebellion like the one presented in SW. People rarely act solely for one reason. Luke's quest for his father is as much a political/moral decision as it is a personal one. Since GL's characters are meant to be symbols, their actions take on symbolic (as well as personal) meaning. I concede that on the point of symbology, GL has provided a very rich playground from which you can go in all sorts of directions. The Luke-haters have taken advantage of it quite well (if not too much). But there are other directions to go to (and, for me, ones that are more positive). Luke's quest for his father is not "merely personal." It's can't be. Saying that ignores the whole thrust of the SW saga.

Tim Blaes: I still haven't bought SKYWALKING (nor read it) and never will. I flipped through some pages at a book store, and reading GL's life story just isn't my idea of an exciting reading experience. You mentioned RED DAWN. I initially joined in the heavy criticism of this film (it's gotten very heated reaction in Europe where some governments have refused to screen it). Having read several interviews with John Milius, I've concluded that he's a very sick person. He gives new meaning to the word "paranoia". But I recently

read a review by a critic I admire and he gave me second thoughts about the film. Ignoring the crazy premise, the film glorifies the idea of rebellion by ordinary people, working collectively to help themselves, an idea I've always found attractive.

Barbara Izzo: Come now, do you really believe that I could ever think that I could ever intimidate True Believers like Brin, Corbett, Stevenson? These are SERIOUS people. I'm not in their League at all. If it makes you feel better, to label my blunt criticisms of the Evil Luke premise as "intimidation", go right ahead, but don't say my aggressiveness is directed against "people who disagree" with me in general. My "intimidation" as you call it has been directed against only one group of fans. I've disagreed with many others. NOTHING I could ever come up with would be accepted by you as "tangible evidence." And the reverse is probably true. You and I see the Saga in such completely different ways that no matter what I or you do with the "facts" would ever matter. But you seem to assume that there exists some independent realm of "facts" that can be plucked and made to fit only one theory. It's not the facts themselves, it's what we do with them that matters.

Karen Finch: Wow, your response to my criticism of the discussion on color really blew me away! I didn't even have Terri Black's article in mind! Actually, I liked Terri's article because it was eminently reasonable, besides being well-written. What I had in mind when I said "WHO CARES?" was the incessant harping on the issue to prove Luke's evil nature. I don't mind it when things like color and fairy tales are analyzed in the Saga. It's only when they're taken to extremes (which Terri did not do) that I begin to complain. My complaint was not directed at Terri's article at all, but I can see why you thought it was. It was my stupidity in not clarifying what I was complaining about. Terri's piece was positive, not meant to assassinate anyone. I'm just tired of the exaggerated attention given to the subject by others. Again, Elsie Bartok brings it up (last ish)--Luke's black

costume. I guess she didn't hear GL's own comments on the subject on the PBS special--comments which I and other fans have pointed to countless times. How many times do we have to go thru it? So, to Karen and Terri, I'm truly sorry for carelessly wording my criticism in such a way that you couldn't help but assume I was insulting Terri's article.

I think that Elsie Bartok is wrong to claim that the Luke-haters are the only ones to come up with original ideas. I've seen many imaginative ideas in each issue of SE alone from other fans, ideas which are just as valid and just as creative. By the way, I'd like to know Ellison's point of view on ROTJ too!

About TOD: Look, I can understand if people like this film just for the sake of adventure. Hell, I was enjoying myself until the scene at the Temple--although I got my first warning before then, during the food scene. What was the point of that scene if not to stereotype in a negative condescending way? A few people have said that since this film is set in the 30's, the charge of racism doesn't apply. There's a lack of historical perspective in that argument. People think that racism was recognized in the 60's and that before then, no one knew what it was. Ever hear of a film called BIRTH OF A NATION made in the early 20's? For months afterward, there were racial riots throughout the country. (For those unfamiliar with the film, it glorified the KKK and portrayed Blacks as rapists of white women and other such hideous stereotypes.) The 1920's and 30's saw an increase in Black activism, and the Roosevelt administration was forced to deal with their demands, at least superficially. Certainly the 60's opened up the national dialogue to a greater extent, but the issue didn't just appear out of the blue with Rosa Park's refusal to sit in the back of the bus in 1954. In the 1980's, after all the riots and bloodshed and international awakening of the past, artists are even more aware (presumably) of the issue and for GL and SS to continue these stereotypes about non-white people, shows only ignorance on their part. I'll quote from an Indian group who pro-

tested the film: the film is permeated with "hideous racial imagery" and "after two hours of seeing Indians depicted as stupid, smelly brutes to be blown away to the cheers and applause of a youthful audience, we were so appalled that we felt we had to condemn the film publicly." The group also mentioned interviews done by local TV stations with audience members, one of whom said, "I don't see anything wrong with the film. Maybe people over there live like that." They go on to say that the film "panders to racial hatred and xenophobia" and "fosters...confusion and ignorance." I underlined two of what I feel to be the most important sections. The last line deserves a little more discussion. I've read fan reactions to this film that take it as an accurate presentation of history. If you want to enjoy the film on just a superficial level without any analysis, that's fine with me. But when fans start drawing historical conclusions from it (thereby taking it seriously), as well as cultural and religious, then TOD has succeeded in doing exactly what that last quote accuses it of doing. It is not your culture being held up to ridicule in front of the world, and so you can't understand what it feels like to the people it has hurt.

On a totally different subject: Linda Deneroff raised an important point with me regarding my "Revolutionary" article in issue #3 (or was it #4?) ((Ed: #4, I think.)) She said that every revolution has had some outside help to carry on its war. I thought of this but didn't include it because I thought there were really only two sides. But how BIG is the Empire/Republic? Might the Rebellion have had some help from outside forces, or from forces within the Empire that have kept themselves quiet? Like some alternate Force-using group? I've always liked the idea of a schism (or several) within the Jedi, and that perhaps Obi-Wan/Luke/Vader-type Jedi are not the only ones around.

One last thing: I nominate Cheree Cargill as best letter-zine editor in all of media fandom! ((Ed: Thanks, Sandi. Can you see me grinning from there?))