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I enjoyed issue #7 of SE. The issue was a lot more peaceful than previous issues and it was a lot better for my blood pressure! There were lots of interesting and thought-provoking ideas in it.

First of all, I'd like to correct an error in my last LoC. In my remarks to Marcia Brin, the second sentence should have read, "I think maybe Darth Vader wasn't following a person at all, but was simply following the ship itself, perhaps because a person doesn't develop a Force "aura" until after he or she has had considerable training in the Force or unless one is actively using the Force." It's amazing what a difference a few little words can make! I hope that the rest of the paragraph made my meaning clear despite the little glitch.

Jeanine Hennig: I enjoyed your article on the Jedi very much! You're right! We do seem to think very much alike! (Not to mention that we share the same tastes in Jedi Knights!) I agree with your theory that while the Force is in everyone, not everyone has the ability to use it. The films seem to concur with both of us that the ability to use the Force is inherited, but apparently knowing how to use that inherited ability needs to be learned. Using the Force doesn't seem to come naturally. I share your feeling that a Jedi must be able to strike a balance between reason and emotion. A Jedi totally devoid of emotion would be too cold and would lose his ability to care and feel. I also agree that the Jedi would probably work with governments, not for them. A Jedi who is committed to the Force, couldn't put himself into a position where he couldn't do as the Force directed him to do because he was under the control or influence of others. He would need to be free and independent so that he could follow his feelings and do what he "felt" was right.

I only disagree with your theory about the Fall of the Jedi. I think it was the Republic that fell because of corruption, not the Jedi. In the Prologue of the novelization of

STAR WARS, it says, "The Republic rotted from within, though the danger was not visible from outside." Although I am not one who views Jedi Knights as perfect saints, I do believe that they were basically good and did not cause their own downfall. Kenobi says of the Jedi in the SW novelization: "...In many ways, they were too good, too trusting for their own health. They put too much trust in the stability of the Republic, failing to realize that while the body might be sound, the head was growing diseased and feeble, leaving it open to manipulation by such as the Emperor."

It's my opinion that Darth Vader was the only Knight that participated in the destruction of the Jedi. However, he certainly didn't accomplish the task alone. He probably got plenty of help from corrupt politicians and from the Imperial forces. The Prologue says: "...Having exterminated through treachery and deception the Jedi Knights, the Imperial governors and bureaucrats prepared to institute a reign of terror among the disheartened worlds of the Galaxy." Kenobi said, "Vader used the training I gave him and the Force within him for evil to help the later corrupt Emperors. With the Jedi Knights disbanded, disorganized, or dead, there were few to oppose Vader." So, it's my feeling that the Jedi Knights were victims of a corrupt Republic, and were not responsible for their own destruction.

Sally Syrjala came up with a very important point in her LoC. She said, "It is when the needs, the ideas of a group of people are neglected to be taken into consideration that conflict arises. I hope the leaders of the Rebellion will be shown wise enough to realize that they too can make the same error of ignoring the needs and wishes of those with whom they are in contention." Maybe I'm wrong, Sally, but you seem to be suggesting that the Imperials should be included in decisions when the New Republican Government is formed. If this is what you are suggesting, I agree with you.

If the Rebel Alliance really wants to establish a true Republic, it would be very necessary that the former Imperials be given an active role in the new

government. If the Imperials were allowed to feel powerless and to feel that their needs and wants were not being represented, the Galaxy could again find itself in a state of war, because these disenfranchised people would very likely themselves rebel against the new government. Whenever a group of people is made to feel powerless and neglected, rebellion becomes a possibility. I think that when the fighting is finally over (which probably won't be for quite a while), and the New Republic is established, some former Imperials need to be given important positions along with former Rebel leaders, and need to have a voice in any and all decisions. Now, before everyone points a blaster in my direction, let me say that I'm sure that not all Imperials are evil, just as all Rebels are not saints. The New Republic would be no better than the Empire it overthrew if it were to ignore the needs and desires of a large group of people (the Imperials), and it would be doomed to failure. Until and unless there is a cooperative effort between the former Rebels and Imperials, I feel that that Galaxy far, far away will never enjoy a lasting, true peace.

Well, if my comments on the necessity of Imperial involvement in the New Republic don't cause me to cross sabers with anyone, my next topic just might do it! I'd like to discuss the issue of droids and their "rights" for a bit. Some people have blasted Luke in previous issues for keeping the whole truth from Threepio before sending him into Jabba's palace and for not informing him of all the dangers involved. I really don't understand why Luke would need to consult with his droid before sending it on a mission! I can't imagine asking my classroom computer's permission before loading a program into it. "Hey, Apple, would you mind allowing 26 little people to practice 2-digit addition today? I know it'll be rough; those little hands are not always that gentle or careful, but I'd really appreciate your help." Kind of silly, don't you think? Maybe I'm in the minority here, but I think it would be just as silly to ask for the consent of a droid before sending it to do a job. Droids are man-made mechanicals

created to improve human life and to serve their creators. They shouldn't require an explanation or a heart-to-heart chat before following a master's orders. Part of the charm of Threepio and Artoo is the fact that they were given personalities which make them more endearing and make them seem more human. However, they are not human; they are not organic. Mechanicals are not totally free-thinking, feeling beings. They may be highly advanced and sophisticated like the robots in the SW universe, and they may be programmed to allow for independent action in order to make them more useful in new and unusual situations, and they may have built-in personalities to make them more pleasant to deal with, but they are automations who are limited by their built-in programming. They are not unique, growing, changing, learning individuals. Mechanicals can be duplicated. They can be replaced if destroyed or damaged. Human beings are totally unique, and cannot be reproduced when lost.

Luke Skywalker and C3PO are not equals. Threepio accepts this. (He even insisted on addressing Luke with an honorific even though young Skywalker encouraged the droid to simply call him "Luke".) I think it would have been a bit ridiculous (as well as risky), for Luke to sit down in conference with Threepio and inform him about the details of the mission, and ask him if he would be willing to volunteer his services. We are talking about a robot here! If things get to a point where a droid's consent is needed before it will perform given tasks, perhaps the next step would be a droid rebellion in which robots would demand their freedom and insist upon equality with humans.

Now, don't get me wrong here. I don't think robots or droids should be mistreated or abused, but I don't think that they should be elevated to the same level as humans either. Call me prejudiced if you like, but, personally, I sincerely hope our world never reaches the point where robots are considered the equals of human beings! I wouldn't care to have robots living independently, owning property, voting, running for public office, serving on juries, competing with

humans as equals for all jobs, and (heaven forbid!) serving as my boss!! I would be interested in hearing how others feel about this issue.

I think it's ironic that the very people who seem so disturbed about Luke not sharing the total truth with Threepio have no qualms about the fact that Ben Kenobi and Yoda kept the truth about Vader from Luke. Who was more entitled to the truth--Luke or Threepio? And who was more in need of knowing the truth? In my opinion, the biggest mistake in the Saga was made by Ben and Yoda when they kept the knowledge of his parentage from young Skywalker. (I don't agree with those who say Luke wasn't ready to receive the information. When is anybody ever ready for such news?!!) I think it would have been far better and far less devastating for Luke to hear the truth at the very beginning from his kind, caring mentors in a calm, peaceful setting, rather than from the one he looked upon as his greatest enemy in a trauma-filled situation. Ben and Yoda set Luke up for an even greater emotional fall by providing him with a more idealized image of his father (a Jedi instead of a navigator on a spice freighter), not to mention the fact that their lies (or at least withholding of the truth), probably shook the very foundation of young Skywalker's belief in his mentors and their teachings. The fact that Luke came out of that Bespin ordeal totally whole (and I'm not talking about physically here), is truly amazing when you really think about it. The experience and its aftermath could have destroyed him completely, or at the very least, made him very cynical, but instead, it changed him for the better. He emerged a stronger, less impulsive, more patient, more forgiving, more mature, more "together" individual, while remaining compassionate, caring and trusting.

Pam LaVasseur & Barbara Brayton: I'm in total agreement with you! "A zine with nothing but Dark Side stories--Aaargh! Depression city!" There is positively NO WAY that I'd ever purchase such a zine! I wouldn't even care for a free copy!

I also agree with your statement: "Han's a nice guy, really!" I prefer the Jedi,

but I can appreciate the Corellian as well. I'm particularly fond of his delightful sense of humor. Unfortunately, I'm one of those who came to like Han less because of his overzealous fans who forced him (no pun originally intended, but it does work here, if you get my meaning!) down my throat, portraying Han as Superhero and Mr. Wonderful, and claiming that my personal favorite, Luke, is Evil Incarnate (in letterzines and fanzines). After a while, my resentment of the attitudes of those fans caused me to see Han in a less positive light. I'm working to improve my attitude. After all, Han's not responsible for the destructive fanaticism of a few of his followers...and Luke couldn't ask for a better more loyal, more caring friend and "big brother" than Han Solo.

While I'm on the subject of Luke and Han, I'd like to say that I wholeheartedly agree with Laura Virgil's comment about them: "If Han isn't Force-user (or even a Force-sensitive), it doesn't make him less of a man than Luke. Because Luke has a few of what many consider 'weaknesses' in his transitory, learning stage 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 complement each other, but who are vastly diverse?" Well said! Wish a few more people would feel that way! (You can probably guess which few I particularly have in mind!)

Laura, I enjoyed your entire letter! You brought up some very interesting points, among them the thought that just as we don't know exactly what Jedi is or should be, perhaps Luke didn't either. You're right: he didn't have any previous real knowledge of the Jedi to draw from, and perhaps some of the Jedi methods were outdated in his time.

Michelle Malkin: You asked "If the Emperor was so powerful why didn't his aura cause disturbance in the Force than other Jedi would have felt and sought out?" I have two thoughts on that. One is, perhaps the did and maybe that's how a lot of Jedi Knights (of the Old Republic) met their deaths. The Emperor can be a very formidable and unscrupulous opponent! (Just ask Luke!) The other idea is

that perhaps, like Yoda, the Emperor was able to shield his aura from others.

To answer another of your questions, I do think that Force talent is necessary in order to become a Jedi (one who uses the Force for good), but it's possible that there were espers who were not Jedi. I like Tim Blaes' distinction between Force-user (Jedi) and Force-sensitive (esper?): "A Force-sensitive is a person with heightened perceptions. They would be able to sense other people's 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 people's thoughts and emotions, move or alter their surroundings, and not just see one possible future, but many." I think that says it very well, Tim.

Terri Black: Good question! What did the Jedi Order do with novitiates who failed the test? (Chuckled over your suggestion! Explains Darth Vader, doesn't it? He had the poor grace to survive his punishment!) Dana-line Bryant suggested to me once that perhaps Jedi training was structured in such a way that those who could have been lost to the dark were carefully weeded out long before they had a chance to become Servants of Evil or to become dangerous to themselves or others. That made sense to me. Otherwise, training Jedi Knights might not have been worth the risk! If there were a few that were not discovered until they completed their training, perhaps they were challenged to lightsaber duels by their instructors on Graduation Day! Darth Vader seems to have been the only Jedi who fell to Darkness and flourished.

Cheree, I'm really sorry! I'm afraid I went over your length limit AGAIN! You're probably going to ban me from your letterzine soon! Would you believe...I did cut out quite a lot before sending this to you?! I hope I didn't wear out your fingers with typing this monster! ((Ed: That's okay. My fingers were down to the second knuckle anyway.)) Someone mentioned last issue that they enjoyed the friendliness of your letterzine. I agree. I tried another brief-

ly, but it seemed too cold, and didn't have enough of a balance.

I wish everyone a happy, relaxing summer! It's too bad there's no new STAR WARS film to help celebrate summer. Do you think we can look forward to one in 1987 for the 10th anniversary of STAR WARS? I hope so!

Stagnant

Jedi

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March 28, 1985

What a terrific issue this was. I have to say that it was undoubtedly the most peaceful, friendliest issue I've seen in many a month and had fascinating articles, interesting reviews and tons of letters that brought up many subjects worthy of comment and discussion.

Jeanine Hennig's article on the Jedi gave me a bit of a chill. I just sent her an article on a very similar subject for next year's issue of her zine! Still, we come at our subjects from different angles and slightly differing viewpoints. It's fascinating to see how different people can handle similar subjects. I also see the Jedi as having many separate communities set up for various reasons. I don't see them as having come apart as Jenni does because I believe that they would have stayed in touch at least through telepathy. But, I do see them as having gradually wound down due to great age (the Jedi had been around for at least a thousand generations, according to Ben Kenobi). Perhaps the eventual fall of the Old Republic and development of the Empire was partially the fault of the Jedi, or it could simply have been brought on by the need for change and growth in the Galaxy. 20,000 years is a long time and, while the Jedi may have led to a long Golden Age in the Galaxy, they could also have created the perfect fertile ground for stagnation and corruption to even-

tually develop. Will Part Two of Jenni's article be in SE#8? This will be a great subject to discuss at MediaWest*Con.

Barbara Tennison's article on the similarities between DUNE and SW was also very interesting. It's been several years since I last read DUNE, so I didn't catch all the similarities. Of course, like most sf fen, I freaked out (showing my age, wot?) when I saw the sandworm in the middle of a Tatooin desert.

I'm always glad to see fanzine reviews by Sandi Necchi because I know that she will be fair and point out both strengths and weaknesses in a constructive way. Her reviews of FAR REALMS 6 and DOCKING BAY 5 were equal to any of her earlier reviews. If I didn't already have both zines, I'd want to get them both at the next convention I attended.

Jenni: You love "1776", too?! Mighod, that means that we're not only fans of the opposite heroes but we like the same kind of musicals! I have a terrific crush on both Ken Howard (Jefferson) and John Cullum ('Neddy' Ruttledge). My favorite moments in the show/movie are when Cullum as Ruttledge sings "Molasses to Rum to Slaves" and when John Adams (portrayed by William Daniels) sings "Is Anybody There?" Both songs give me the chills. Then again, I love early American history and Jefferson, Franklin and Paine are my three favorite historical figures. I'm kind of fond of John Adams, too, even if his politics were a shade to the right of Jesse Helms. (Do any of you out there who have only heard of Franklin's reputation as a womanizer know that he was in favor of giving women the vote? That isn't mentioned very often.)

Han's "I know" line is TESB was not a real pain! What are you trying to do, Jenni, bring this subject back as a topic of debate after letting it rest in peace (or pieces) all these years? All you have to do is look at his face to see that he is not being funny. He's acknowledging to Leia that he feels the same about her, though he can't actually say it. I never hear anyone who has seen TESB more than once laugh at that line because they have gone beyond accepting the line simply on face value. ((Ed's

note: I agree with Mickey. I have never understood the humor a lot of people seem to find there. From the first time I saw it, Han's "I know" was to me one of the most heart-breakingly touching moments I'd ever seen.))

The question of whether a Jedi is immune to Falling to the Dark Side after making his/her choice not to is a fascinating one. I see Luke as walking a constant tightrope because he came so very close, but not giving in to it because of his inner strength. For a Jedi to be immune to Falling would make him/her too godlike to be believable.

Barbara Tennison: With the advanced medical knowledge that must exist in a mixed culture as advanced as that shown in the SW universe, I wonder if it wouldn't have been possible to heal Darth Vader. After all, if they can make clones, why couldn't they clone him a new pair of lungs? Perhaps not allowing him to be completely healed was one way the Emperor had of keeping Vader in thrall to him? Also, I am another who, along with you and Carol Peters, believes that only Vader's armor was burnt on the funeral pyre. To get a little puckish on this subject, maybe discorporation is necessary in order to go to Jedi heaven.

In reference to both your and Cheree's comments on what Leia will do after the war is over, I don't see her having the same kind of problem that Tom Paine did. After all, Leia was a senator who did secret spy work for the Alliance; she wasn't a political firebrand who went out deliberately looking for a cause to justify her existence (much as I like Paine and what he did, this is a fact). Leia is trained to do many things aside from fight in or lead a rebellion. She does not appear to be the main leader of the Alliance, though she does seem to be pretty high up. Perhaps she'll become one of the organizers of the new government or she may go on helping those who will seek out the remnants of the Empire in some way. I'm sure there's plenty for her to do without the necessity of turning her into an Empress or the like arising.

Lin Ward: Someone wrote a letter about Intercourse with Harrison Ford?! Tsk. And all

this time I thought this was a decent zine, safe for the kiddies. I'm certainly glad no one wrote a similar article about HF going to Bird in Hand, PA!

Thanks for your nice comments on KR4. I kind of grieve for it, too. It feels strange not to be breaking my neck to get it done in time for Media-West*Con, but I wouldn't have done it if I hadn't enjoyed it so much.

On the subject of prejudices: Are the Stormtroopers in the SW universe clones? If they are, how will they be viewed when the war is over? Were the Clone Wars fought against rebelling clones, or to free them?

Mary Keever: Probably Luke was called "Wormie" by his "friends" because his uncle's farm was out in the desert where the sandworms were.

Isn't the idea of an all Darkside SW zine a chiller? Even so, I hope that someone does decide to do one. I'd gladly come up with a story or vignette nasty enough to fit into it. Besides, I'd love to see how other writers would handle the subject and who they would choose to write about. Can droids be Dark Side? What if C3PO's dummy schtick is an act and he's been working for the Empire all these years? After all, he lied to Luke about not being able to tell stories and not knowing the Princess in ANH.

There is still a lot of prejudice against media fen from general sf fen. I can't understand the attitude of such people. I always thought that sf fen were supposed to have open minds no matter what kind of sf or fantasy they enjoy. When it gets to the point of such fen impugning our intelligence, I feel that they are not only playing dirty pool but showing their own lack of intelligence. I'd like to see some kind of panel at a general sf convention with both general and media sf fen where this subject could be discussed openly. What the heck are these general sf fen afraid of--that most of us are women, that we've created a fertile ground for developing successful pro writers, that we're not willing to be snobs about our interests, what?

Sally Syrjala: How is your last name pronounced? I've been meaning to ask you that for a

long time and kept forgetting about your comment in regards to Sandi Necchi's letter last issue that we should cherish all ideas and that the SW sag seems to be speaking of this need to respect the individual. reminds me of the SW letterzine editor (not Cheree) who recently refused to print an article of Luke Skywalker that Sandi had sent her on political grounds threatening to ban her from the zine in future, and then actually banning her completely because she had the nerve to complain about such treatment. Such things don't only happen in Trek fandom; SW fandom isn't immune to it, either. I can safely say that the editor in question can't ban me from the zine after this letter. I've already cancelled my subscription to her zine.

Carole Regine: Maybe Ben Kenobi wasn't the only Jedi fighting with Bail Organa during the Clone Wars. Perhaps he was the General in command of whole army of Jedi. Just because Leia said that Kenob "served" her father doesn't necessarily mean that he did it alone. And, if he was commanding an army under Bail Organa it could have been because the had been sent by the Jedi to defend Alderaan or whatever (Could Bail Organa have been secret Jedi?)

A little horn tooting here I do have a scene in one of my stories that will be in PERFECT FUSION I in which fear of Luke becoming a Jedi is very prominent for various reasons--fear of the Jedi or Luke alone Falling, racial prejudice and power seeking by certain members of the Alliance Council. Considering what has happened in that particular Galaxy, this kind of behavior should be understandable and expected.

About Ben Kenobi's age--we really have no idea how old he is. He could have been much older than Anakin when he began the younger man's training. Considering the advanced state their medical science must be in, Kenobi could have been over 100 of our years old during ANH.

Susan Henderson: I'll be 38 by the time this letter is printed. I'm a Han fan. Most of my SW friends and acquaintances are in their middle to late 30's and are Han or Luke fans. I wonder if that's significant. All it probably means

is that most of us form our closest friendships with those who share the closest common interests.

Your idea about white signifying ignorance and gray through black signifying growth in knowledge and wisdom is the best one I've heard yet on the subject.

LaVasseur & Brayton: I'm not the one who came up with the idea that Han was still blind in ROTJ. I believe that it was Barbara Izzo's idea. I don't agree with it, though I do think it's a terrific story idea.

Laura Virgil: I'd like to know exactly what Jenni means by the Jedi are a race, too. She can't mean genetically, else Yoda would be an impossibility. Then again, if Yoda is an 800+ year old human, maybe he would be all green and shrunken looking! (Put down that club, Jenni!)

I kind of like the idea that Luke only had time to learn the basics of being a Jedi from Ben and Yoda. If the SW Galaxy is in a period of corruption and stagnation, then it needs new teachings for it to be able to pick itself up again. Outright change is necessary, not just continuing with the same old ways and ideas. If they just go on with the old ways, things may improve for awhile, but they will start to fall apart a lot faster than they did the first time. Maybe it's time for all babies to be screened for esper ability and trained to use whatever talents they have for good or ill. We don't know that only the Jedi are espers in the SW universe. Perhaps there are many others who either haven't had proper training or don't even know that such abilities lie within them. If this is true, perhaps it's time something was done about it to prevent sports such as the Emperor from developing independently for evil again.

Sandra Necchi: I'll have to lend you some early issues of JUNDLAND WASTES to give you an idea of how virulent the anti-Han letters were. Fortunately, these writers were not organized to the extent that the anti-Luke people are, so they gradually fizzled away. They were rapidly replaced by the anti-romance story people who only wanted action/adventure stories and didn't care what

anyone else wanted. They fizzled away, too. That is generally what happens to writers who are consistently negative. They just fizzle away--especially when people stop replying to them.

Maggie Nowakowska: The end of your letter really hit home, especially the part where you stated "Logic is only a tool, an aide to understanding; it 'proves' nothing." Blessings on you for that. Tolerant is a word I have difficulty dealing with, but I think that it fits what you are saying here. We should all tolerate each others' beliefs or opinions, even if we don't agree with them, rather than tearing down people who don't agree with us. Live and let live.

Cheree: Peace. See you next issue and at MediaWest!

Appreciation

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April 14, 1985

Hello, everyone! I'm new to these pages, although I've been reading SE for a while. It just looks like so much fun that I figured it was time I joined in. I love the idea of Jeanine Hennig's articles on the Jedi. I admit to having a simplistic view of the Jedi, so Jeanine really made me think. In my musings, though, one line keeps coming back to me--"Once you start down the Dark path, forever will it dominate you, consume you it will." (I never could figure out how to punctuate Yoda's sentences.) Initially, I thought Yoda meant that when you turn to the Dark Side, you'll never return. But obviously that is not true, as in Anakin's case and, some may even say, in Luke and Ben's cases, as well. So maybe being dominated by the Dark Side does not necessarily mean a Jedi is evil, but he can have the potential for evil. When I first read Jeanine's statement that "there could be a Jedi of the Dark who is not evil or ruled by that

same Darkness," I said, "Wait a minute--no way!" If a Jedi is not evil or ruled by the Dark Side, then he is of the Light. But perhaps Luke and Ben are still dominated by the Dark, in the sense that they can never forget about it. Ben had to watch while his failure allowed the creation of Darth Vader and Luke has to live with the knowledge that he could turn. Which leads me to another of Jeanine's questions. Can Luke still be turned to the Dark Side? In Lucas' world, probably not. Luke has made his decision, but...so did Anakin when he became Darth Vader. It would be a lot more interesting if Luke isn't immune to the Dark Side. It may not be easy to turn Luke, but the doubt would always be in the back of his mind.

I also enjoyed the other article in the last issue. Barbara Tennison did a wonderful job finding similarities between DUNE and SW. But like she said, they are not the same story. Another difference might be the reason the authors chose to tell a hero story. One was looking for a theme that most people could easily relate to, while the other wanted to explore and challenge this theme.

I'm a fan of the DUNE novels, but I was absolutely disappointed with the film. The major flaw was that the filmmakers did not care enough about Paul. Perhaps they were infatuated with the villains, or the idea of adapting this classic to the screen, or maybe they just lost sight of what the story is really about. I have to admit, though, that the actors were well chosen. I believed the characters looked like this, except for the most important role, of course. Paul is supposed to be a young boy (between 15 and 18 years old) who grows up on Arrakis, but the actor looked 25.

Debbie Gilbert and Terri Black mentioned Norman Spinrad's comments on Worldcon. Maybe he's right that the emphasis should be on SF, but before Worldcon committees start objecting to media-oriented presentations and panels, let me just say this...I started reading SF again because of STAR WARS. And, specifically, because I went to cons and heard people talking about these books. I can't say I'm a SF

fan, because my tastes are very limited, but I am familiar with the literature.

My own experiences with mundane reaction to fandom is not much different than those already expressed. Only my family and closest friends know the true extent of my fannish interests, though. I may tell a co-worker that on my day off I went to a con or stood in line for a movie and they just seem to take it in stride. The major reason is that a lot of people I work with like SF, although they aren't into fandom. Anyway, it doesn't seem to be a big deal.

I'd like to join Lin Ward in expressing my appreciation for all the authors, artists, and editors who let us share in their adventures. I can only guess at the amount of effort required to produce a zine. Actually, I've always wondered about the ratio between the creators and consumer-only fan? I would think that a lot of fans are needed to support the many SW/media zines. Am I an exception in fandom (I don't write fiction or draw) or the norm? ((Ed's note: Very interesting question! My zines, A TREMOR IN THE FORCE and FIELD STUDIES, have print runs of 200 copies which sell out in about a year's time. TIF#2 had about 20-25 contributors to it and, of the other buyers, I recognized perhaps 1/4 to 1/3 or them as regular or at least sporadic zine contributors or editors. Let's hear from all you out there--are you strictly a reader or do you publish occasionally?))

Mary Keever: I have no idea why Luke was called Wormie, but I believe that was King Arthur's nickname as a child. There have been a lot of bad feelings about the SW/Lucasfilm fan club lately. I, too, wish that the newsletter could have a fannish slant, but who makes up the fan club? Adults or children? Anyway, it makes good business sense to let us know about other Lucasfilm events. I'm particularly interested in Lucas' computer projects.

I've thought a little about why there are many more women in media fandom than men, but I haven't come up with any good theories on my own. I don't know anything about SF fandom, but it seems to be male-dominated. If so, could it just be the subject matter? Somehow, I

really can't believe guys don't want to talk about SW/ST. Is SF fandom different in a more obvious way? Aren't their zines filled with stories, too? Maybe it has to do with where the fans are coming from. If the only men that know about media fandom are SF fans, they're already predisposed to ignore it. So where would the male media fans come from? I discovered SW fandom through ON THE MARK, Mark Hamill's fan club. I don't think you're going to find many men there. ((Ed's note: Another interjection here. I've been puzzled, too, by the self-imposed segregation. Could it be that most women in media fandom are there because of an attraction to a particular star or stars of a movie? For instance, I originally got into STAR TREK fandom way back when because I was fascinated by Mr. Spock. After a few years of intensive activity, I burned out and gafiated for about four years. It took Harrison Ford to get me interested again--not in STAR WARS or EMPIRE, but in RAIDERS. From there, I quickly progressed into Ford fandom, then SW, although I'd loved SW without being in fandom. It was not the storyline of either movie that drew me back in--it was the character of Indiana Jones. Then, oddly, I became a Hanfan not through the Han I saw on the screen, but the Han I read about in zines. Could it be that women in media fandom are there strictly for fantasy fulfillment with a particular character? From what I've been able to deduce from the men in SF fandom, their primary interest is the adventure/plot of the story, not the characters. Is that what differentiates us--men/adventure vs. women/characters?))

Bev Clark's correlation between the Falcon's "peculiar dialect" and computer languages rang a bell. A computer program that runs on one type of computer may not necessarily run on another kind of computer. Even if both computers support the same language, each could provide extensions peculiar to that machine. I had never thought to consider these different versions of a language as "dialects", though.

Oh, well, I'll keep my first outing to SE to a minimum...till next ish--clear skies!

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April 13, 1985

I don't know why everyone always wanted their letters in the front of the zine. I know exactly where to find mine every time--way in the back. This time SE arrived at the beginning of spring break, but I barely got it read, much less replied to. Well, I did get a temporary full time job, so I guess I have an excuse. (Not to mention having a Blake's 7 zine to read... but anyway.)

This time I want to reply to myself on two items, since I've done further thought and/or research. First, I was fascinated to see Debbie Gilbert's opinion on the same Norman Spinrad column I commented on. It made a nice counterpoint, especially since it wasn't a reply to me, but a parallel development as it were. Between writing my letter and reading Debbie's, I had the opportunity to do quite a bit of research into mainstream fandom, mostly for my F&SF class at college. When it comes right down to it, Worldcon was really not the place to show the trilogy. In the mainstream fanzines I read, the most charitable opinion of media fandom I saw expressed was that it's one of mainstream's "recruitment media." In a way it may be true, but the converse is just as true; and media fandom did spring from mainstream fandom, transplanting most of its conventions entire. But as it stands in 1985, the two are separate entities. It wouldn't bother me to join a mainstream zine or two (they're free for the LoCing!), but I wouldn't try to discuss SW at any length in them. The possibility of crossover by individuals isn't necessarily followed by the possibility of merger of groups. In the past it did follow; the first printed fanzine (in the 1930's) contained a listing of all SF films made to that date, compiled by Forrest J. Ackerman. The split seems to have come with the New Wave, when SF writers first deliberately aspired to Art but the visual media failed to consistently follow suit. By the time STAR TREK came on, TV and movies were sci-fi, if not "skiffy", and not to be considered true SF at all,

regardless of how good they were or even how well they satisfied the pre-New Wave notion of SF. Mainstream and media are two different worlds now, and the SW marathon was invading mainstream's space, as the saying goes, at Worldcon. The Hugos are important, and we have nothing to gain by disdaining them.

I'm not sure how I want to respond to my analogy of race prejudice. It's more in the realm of intellectual prejudice, which can be an element of race prejudice but isn't confined to it. The attitude "I'm smarter than you are" can have any number of justifications; in this case it's "...because I like the more high-brow material." I certainly don't want to say this is the attitude of all mainstream fans; far from it. Is it Norman Spinrad's attitude? Well, I can't read minds, but my perceptions of his attitude are what made me angry. I don't approve of such strong rhetoric on a non-moral issue.

Now for the second part of Narcissus Revisited, I want to say a little more on the linguistics of the word parsec. Parsec is a coined word, a combination of parallax and second (for "parallax of one second"). Parallax comes into English from Greek (not "green") science through the French language. Second comes from Latin through French, as an adjective ("after the first") as well as a noun (which can be, interestingly enough, 1/60th of a minute of time as well as of a minute of arc). The assumptions we have to make if we believe that "parsec" is the "real" word the "real" Han Solo used become absolutely absurd on this level. Parallax is okay, being essentially a geometric concept which any sentient binocular race is going to arrive at eventually (it being the basis of depth perception as well as astronomical distance measurement). It would, of course, have a different term, Greeks being unique to Earth (Galactica notwithstanding). But "second"! There's nothing inevitable about the division of a circle into 360 degrees each divisible into 60 minutes each divisible into 60 seconds. A measurement of arc is needful, yes, but not this particular unwieldy system, nor its terminology. Finally, the combination of the two in

"parsec" is done by a thoroughly modern method akin to compounding but much more deliberate. As I said, it's a coinage, done by a specific scientist at a specific point in history on a certain planet. Even the concept is unnecessary--even for Earth it's only useful for measurement of the distance of the very nearest stars. If a planet's distance from its nearest stars is farther, it won't develop the concept at all.

Now, after all that, I must point out that the "real" word Han used could have meant "a measure equal to a distance having a parallax of one unit of arc from Corell," to paraphrase Webster, in which case, the "translation" was as accurate as feasible. So, what do y'all think?

Ooops, did I say "Elizabethan translators of the Bible"? I apologize to King James and anyone else whose historical sensibilities were jarred.

Another oops--I saw ROTJ again tonight (finally) and discovered my error in saying Ben was the first person Luke saw when he arrived on Dagobah. I hope that blunder didn't discredit my whole argument.

Sandra and Jeanine: No offense taken. But thanks.

The "my husband, my wife" is a side track, but here's my two cents. How else shall we refer to spouses? "The ol' man"? "The little woman"? Possessives aren't limited to marriage terminology. There's "my co-pilot"--does Han own Chewie? "My friend"--do Han and Luke own each other? And so on. The problem, of course, is the long history of abuses of the marriage institution. We have a right to be cautious; battered wives, for example, have a tendency to put up with it because they somehow believe a man has the right to treat his wife the way he wants. No one "owns" another human being. But the terminology is the least of society's troubles; the healing of society will result in the change of what terms need to be changed, not vice versa.

I like Jeanine's distinction of "power for power, or power for purpose." The former, she says, is harmful even to the wielders. It seems to me that, if we can assume the Emperor used similar techniques to turn Vader as he used on Luke, that he sowed the seeds of his own

destruction in doing so. His hold over Vader was Vader's hatred of him, and his fatal mistake was to forget that. Vader followed the Emperor as long as it was in his own interests, but when the Emperor attacked his own flesh and blood, there was no longer any reason for loyalty. (Remember, although Vader seemed prepared to destroy Luke if he wouldn't turn, that Luke sensed Vader's unwillingness to see him die.) All the poor guy wanted was to have his son with him, and since he couldn't imagine himself turning good, he of course would have to turn Luke evil. If that doesn't sound like love, consider that Daddykins hasn't had much practice at love for at least 20 years. It's the first stirrings of that which will soon break the Emperor's hold over him.

My pen runneth over, as they say: but one last thought. I wondered for the first time tonight how DV knew Luke had built a new lightsaber? Of course, he knew Luke needed one, because he'd personally sent the old one into irretrievability. But for all he knew, Obi-Wan had a stash of sabers somewhere. Could he just tell it was a new one, or is there more to it?

Thus indicated, I repeat: "There's a fungus among us!" I like the Old 'Shroom as much as anybody, and I'll tease him if I want, so there!

Fly casual!

Luke Lust

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April 12, 1985

Hello all--I'll get straight to the comments.

Jenni: Hi! I love "1776", too. More importantly, where can I get some Luke porn!? Pant, pant!

Rose (and all "Blade Runner"

fen): I like the movie, too, but not as much as I liked the rough cut. It was positively criminal what the "powers that be" did to that movie.

Barbara T.: Wonder why I bother to write LoC's--I ought to just point to yours and say, "What she said!"

Mary: I'm SURE you, Jenni and I could take care of Luke's virginity (happily; heh heh heh), but there's three of us and only one of him, and, uh, err...better stop that train of thought before Cheree has to change the zine's rating! Lech, lech, lech.

Bev: I agree with your remarks about the Falcon's "peculiar dialect". I've seen many variations in computer languages and operating systems and have commented several times, "That's a weird version."

Pam and Barb: Sorry I had to move, but glad we got together before I left. Oh, well, it probably would have confused everyone no end had we started writing three-person LoCs.

Mickey: Yeah, why is it OK for Han to scream and not Luke? And add one more vote for Duncan Regehr as Anakin/Darth.

Tim: The biggest problem with using established songs in futuristic settings is that these songs carry a lot of emotional baggage around with them, and invariably remind people of specific places and times (e.g. AMERICAN GRAFFITI). Regarding "V", I had a bad feeling about it at Worldcon, just from hearing one of the executive producers talk. Mundane to the max and a jerk to boot. My ROTJ erasers do glow in the dark--but don't erase too well. And I want a RUNAWAY robot spider, too!

Maybe we ought to find out how much it would cost to do ROTJ on radio and then try to raise the money somehow. Does anybody have any ideas?

Regarding Norman Spinrad's feelings/comments about SW and media fen: I alternate between (1) thinking he ought to be shown the error of his ways by actually (horrors) meeting and talking to some of us (or reading what we write); and (2) wanting to hire the A-Team to redecorate his house.

TEMPLE OF DOOM racist? Gee, really? I've gotta agree with Mary Urhausen; I'm part German and part French, so I guess I should've been REALLY outraged

at RAIDERS. Also must agree with Jeannie Webster (Force knows we've discussed this over the phone at all-too-great length). The dinner scene showed that the villagers' fears about the palace's evil were true--that the Maharajah and crew were The Bad Guys, not everyone in India. The villagers were portrayed as good, hard-working, religious people who loved their children. Is that racist?

Back to my question about why fandom is so overwhelmingly female: perhaps another reason is that females are more willing to work at something with no hope for monetary reward. Despite the best efforts of everyone, boys are still raised to think about the bottom line. I'd still like to hear more of everyone else's thoughts on this.

And to clarify a comment I made a few issues back: when I said Luke was the hero, I didn't mean to imply Han wasn't one. Of course, he is, and so's Leia, Chewie, Lando, the droids, the Ewoks, the Three Stooges (hee! hee!) and the rest of the Rebellion.

Well, keep up the good work, Cheree (even if my copy did have the middle four pages in backwards). ((Ed: Whoops! That must have been a result of all of us talking about fannish happenings while we were collating--the hands moving faster than the brains!)) Are you going to print more pictures of fen? And thanks to everyone for toning down the heated debate--it's so much nicer. SE#7 was a positive delight to read.

See everyone next time--till then, may the Force be with us all!



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April 18, 1985

Jenni Hennig's article on the Jedi is very thoughtful, with its interesting comparisons to medical profession, Pern dragonriders, and the like, emphasis on use of a tool, rather than dwelling on the nature of its power. I don't really think there's enough material in the movies to formulate a scenario about how the Jedi worked when they were a going concern rather than hunted fugitives, so the subject is wide open and (until Lucas takes up the subject more thoroughly if and when in the first or third trilogy) will remain so. This means fewer restrictions, but more work, for the writer, and Hennig is clearly willing to put thought into her Jedi background.

Have recently re-seen ROTJ, since LFL has so kindly re-released it. Curiously, or perhaps not curiously, I enjoyed it much more this time than during its initial release, even though that was far more exciting. There are perhaps pleasures in having an imperfect memory, in rediscovering something like this after an absence. One point occurred to me: During the duel between Luke, Palpatine and Vader on the Death Star, Palpatine foolishly taunts Luke with his imminent fall to the Dark Side, which is all but visibly the impetus that prevents Luke from losing all control at several points. It's the least intelligent thing Palpatine could have done, and detracts considerably from his supposed character as someone who could ever have taken and held power. I wonder if Palpatine might not be verbalizing consciously here, but thinking, which Luke "hears" at this particularly Force-sensitive moment, with the clarity and impact of speech. (I'm ignoring little details like the Emperor's mouth moving--from Luke's POV, Palpatine is speaking, and therefore his mouth moves; mental expectations account for it...or something.)

Another insight has to do with Luke, Vader and Palpatine also: this is the classic triumvirate of youth, maturity and age most usually presented as the maiden, mother and crone

faces of the goddess. Surely men need not lack the same distinctions, though the only example that's been presented to me so far isn't necessarily complete: youth, warrior and wizard seem less a set of inevitable stages than, in the warrior and wizard, often-opposed skills which may be mutually exclusive. Anyone else have thoughts on this? At any rate, the three figures outlined in black against the blue throneroom are a dramatic picture full of resonance.

Have recently seen *BLADE RUNNER* and *WITNESS*, which are opposites in many ways but both fascinating films as well as vehicles for Harrison Ford, whose gallant simplicity (deceptive simplicity) adds to both. Loved the moments of Ford planning wood and otherwise doing carpenterly things. I won't say movies aren't good at fooling you (that's their business), but it's nice to know there's a real craftsman pretending to be a real craftsman, sometimes... And the house-building sequence in *WITNESS* is just tremendous. It's odd that BR caught a lot of critical flak for having a "routine cop story" combined with a lot of "art film" signals, while *WITNESS* is receiving acclaim for doing approximately the same thing, except that that noncop element has less SF glitter and slower pacing. I honestly don't think the "foreign" cultures, whether replicant, future, or Amish, were of significantly greater or less foreignness in one film or the other (at least to the urban, modern viewer); and the emphasis on visual imagery, balance of shoot-out plot and love plot, and such things, were similar, even if the specific content was vastly different in the two movies. BR is perhaps more hackneyed in the storyline Hollywood picked out of the Philip Dick book, and *WITNESS* has more traditional pictures. I suspect BR scares us with the spectre of having to cope with the sort of urban corruption we (unhappily) have learned already to take for granted in order to preserve our sanity. What with one thing and another, *WITNESS* is the more subtle film, in more ways than one.

Annie Wortham: Aww, I thought the picture with the antennae was cuuute! Don't be ashamed of your antennae (no

matter whose father is responsible for them). And a respectful snicker to Mary Keever's notion that Luke has lost everything but his virginity. C'mon, how can you be sure? Ooops, don't answer that--but good luck.

Bev Clark: You are now talking over my head, but you're certainly flying. Keep it up and I'll try to track you... The uncertainty of free will is one of those questions that doesn't, to my mind, have an answer, and is therefore recreational for discussion. Getting down to matter and energy being different forms of the same thing, well, of course, we're all made up of the Force, which simply is all the atoms and all their relationships! Isn't that what the "surrounding and binding us together" line is a rough expression of? I'm reminded of the joke in which someone says, "It surrounds us and binds the universe together? That's gravity!" Plunging from the sublime to the ridiculous (which seems better-connected than usual here), this is part of the truth, gravity being another major aspect of the Force, or rather, of the matter/energy interface. If that's not what Lucas meant, intuitively or otherwise, as his concept of the Force, well, it'll do until the real thing comes along.

Good to see the remarks by Joseph Campbell that you and Maggie quoted. The note that movies are now carrying the lines of thought previously supported by literature is a good one. Movies certainly present a parallel to literature in presenting ideas, though I doubt verbal story-telling (as opposed to picture-and-sound storytelling) will due out. The bard is older than the theater, and I suspect the logistics (bards are a lot cheaper) is only one reason for that. By the way, I hope you and Maggie will include your lists of the ten best SF movies in future letters to SE.

Debbie Gilbert: Lack of realistic politics is very evident in the SW saga, true--that just isn't the kind of story Lucas is telling. I miss the depth some Alliance vs. Empire interactions other than battles would have given (and fan fiction that can show such things delights me) but the personal, character-centered story is SW's

strength and what lifts it above its chosen space opera genre.

Picking up on your mention of the Jedi as guaranteed keepers-of-peace, known to be incorruptible, this does fit with the extraordinary status of Vader as a "fallen" Jedi--perhaps the Emperor liked to show him off as proof of his power over men's minds, as much as for Vader's own talents. He wasn't hustled off the Imperial stage after betraying the Jedi, which might seem a more practical course by way of hiding the evidence and also getting rid of a dangerous weapon. So it's possible Vader's turn to the Dark Side was (for a full-fledged Jedi, if Vader was one) unique. Aside from that, the Jedi being generally incorruptible would account for their being killed off rather than discredited, disowned, or simply thrown out of their jobs by the new Emperor, when he wanted to get rid of them.

Brayton and LaVasseur: Regardless of the medical definition, I suspect popular terminology will consider as "twins" any two children born of the same pregnancy, whatever their genetic relationship. You're right that the differences between identical twins, fraternal twins, and half-siblings of whatever birth order, can be important in discussions like this, and the relationship should be specified any time we're getting technical. I doubt, however, that Obi-Wan was being particularly technical, so half-siblinghood for Luke and Leia seems to be a possibility, still. As a couple of other letters pointed out, that possibility implies a different social set up than the (admittedly more likely) assumption that the two are simply fraternal twins.

Laura Virgil: RAEBNC--too good a letter not to mention, though. Mostly, I just agree with it.

Marlene Karkoska: That's a nice defense of Luke, something I'm glad to see even if I didn't have energy to do it myself. Some of it's a bit picky, but then, this has been made a picky subject. Another theory to account for the published differences in the twins' ages is that one or the other (or both) has a different age-of-record than his or her actual age. Suppose the Larses moved out of

Mos Eisley with a twelve-year-old Luke, and immediately settled into their new homestead with a "thirteen-year-old" Luke, for instance? Or Leia may actually be twenty (instead of eighteen or sixteen) in ANH, matching Luke's age then, which might account for a little of her maturity and experience at ostensibly a very young age for a Senator. If she hadn't been adopted by the Organas immediately on her birth, but later, this sort of age-juggling might just be possible for her, too.

Tim Blaes: I think you're right that futuristic music is not the only choice for a story set in the future. Beyond the gosh-wow SFX trappings, the stories have to be about people with emotions, in situations analogous to those given in folk stories already--as you point out. Have you heard, by the way, the song by Queen which retells the old SF theme of near-lightspeed time disparities? It's very old-fashioned, ballad-like music (especially for Queen), and the content had me howling for days after I listened to the words for the first time. The title is "'39", and came out in '75 or so.

Sandra Necchi: There are other "sides", in SW proper, to the political conflict than simply Rebel/Empire: the traders, the underworld, the aliens, all represent interests which have their own needs, which may aid either the Alliance or the Empire, or ignore both. Maybe the Alliance is doing notably better in ROTJ due to the addition of a lot of Mon Calimari personnel and equipment, say. Ackbar's flagship seemed to have a lot of his compatriots as crew; it could mean a major political gain if the Alliance has open support from a planet or system (or whatever), perhaps from outside the Empire. As with the normal functioning of the Jedi, I don't think there's enough evidence to pin down anything definite about the status of extra-Imperial established groups, but we can speculate... Though the background is epic, SW is presented as the close-up story of a few individuals, meaning that personal motivations must indeed stand in for large-scale political issues in the story structure, as well as the personal and political being mixed within characters' individual motivations. Similarly,

the appearance of a few seemingly-organized aliens can be interpreted as outside political support.

Jeannie Webster: Certainly the major SW characters are based on stock stereotypes (or archetypes); this is why we are drawn to them initially. I think, though, that we enjoy them the more for their individuality, for the ways they depart from given stereotypes, as well. The tension between fulfilling one set of expectations without fulfilling it too well--without boring us--creates beautiful story interest. Leia as a sharp-tongued sharpshooter inside the long white dress...Luke who wears black, not white, into his climactic battle...Han who unheroically whines that "it's not my fault", between moments of heedless self-sacrifice for his comrades...Obi-Wan who wrangles, instead of kowtowing, to his old teacher Yoda. Leia, who has to fulfill two sets of expectations anyway (storybook princess and spunky female sidekick/partner) has always confused the most people, but she has been interesting from the first.

Heinlein's juvenile SF (and some of his other books) frequently pairs a young, naive hero with a (relatively) older worldly-wise hero, so the pattern you describe has roots in more than war movies (not that the Heinlein juveniles are all that different in spirit, usually).

Spirited

Defense

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April 14, 1985

Greetings and Salutations!

"The Private Life of a Jedi" --Nice article. Good compact edition of thoughts and ideas. Congratulations. Anger, fear and aggression were said to be

of the Dark Side. But that would not necessarily mean that all emotions were, right? Maybe that has just been assumed.

Jeanine Hennig: (Barb) I was discussing the famous "I know" with someone recently and I pointed out that this is really Harrison's fault. If Han had said, "I love you too" like he was originally supposed to, there would be no problem. But I know what he said was not meant to hurt Leia; all I have to do is watch his face and listen to his voice. It was a purely spontaneous statement and I think he not only acknowledged her feelings, but his own as well. His "I love you" in ROTJ was also spontaneous, and therefore I think they came from the heart. (Leia turned the tables rather neatly in ROTJ, but he didn't seem to mind.)

Rose Arnold: (Barb) I'm with you. BLADE RUNNER is one of my all-time favorite films, ending and all. My only disappointment is that there wasn't more development of the Deckard/Rachael relationship. They might have put some of that on the video-cassette instead of the extra violence.

Bev Clark: (Barb) If one wants to view STAR WARS on a strictly cartoon level, one can do that. But if one wants more in the way of characterization, that is there also. The characters reveal more from their actions or their facial expressions than they might through several minutes of heavy dialogue.

Mary Urhausen: (Pam) I guess somewhere we missed the boat. I probably should have been insulted that Belloq portrayed the French as unscrupulous, greedy and power hungry in ROTLA.

(Barb) Thank you for your spirited defense of George Lucas (not that he needs any, but it never hurts). Let's look at it this way--if not for him, there would be no SW films, no SW fanzines, SW letterzines, and worst of all, nothing to complain about!

I think working elephants in Asia are treated rather well, once broken in. Roger Caras' book "Sarang" goes into that process in some detail.

Susan Henderson: (Pam) "The Cult of the True Imperial"? I love it! Believe me, I almost laughed myself off my chair when I saw it. OK, back to letter 5

I also said Ozzel saw Piett as a "viable, if less experienced, rival with more common sense." You don't have to defend Piett's honor with me; I was complimenting him and I'm a rebel sympathizer! I totally agree with you about Ozzel, and I still stand by my statement that Veers is a pro; I'll add Needa to that list. But it still doesn't win me over to the Imperial side.

(Barb) I think my statement was valid as far as it went, but I wasn't talking about Piett per se. I was referring to Imperial officers as a group and my next statement was, "I said most of the officers were incompetent, not all of them." Perhaps incompetent was a poor choice of words. One can competently do the work of a corrupt system. I can't see any reason to change my view of the Imperial leadership or of the Empire in general. I have nothing against Piett; at least he knew scum when he saw it (the bounty hunters, not the rebels).

Carole Regine: According to the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC book "Splendors of the Past", a dagoba is a Buddhist shrine. There is supposed to be a shrine inside containing some relic or sacred symbol of the Buddha. It has three tiers and a dome.

Marlene Karkoska: Another thought on stories geared to children; if Disney is strictly for children, why do so many adults go to Disney movies unescorted?

(Barb) I liked your letter. Well said!

Re: Marcia's two questions, I got confused by the first one (Marcia, what were you referring to in the second part?). Vader may simply have assumed Luke was aboard the Falcon, without bothering to check it through the Force. And, as you say, maybe he hadn't the faintest idea where to find Luke, otherwise, so simply took the most expedient route. When Luke turned out not to be on the Falcon, he just went to Plan B. In my opinion, the Emperor sensed a disturbance in the Force before Luke went to Dagobah. And, his next line is "We have a new enemy--Luke Skywalker."

It could be that everyone has a Force-aurea, but that of a Force-user or potential Force-user is different. Therefore, Vader would have sensed Leia on

the Falcon and thought it was Luke.

Isn't it odd that both Vader and the Emperor all through TESB refer to Anakin Skywalker as if he were someone else? It's my feeling that Anakin was just beginning to come alive in TESB; many of Vader's actions in TESB don't make a lot of sense unless he were waging some kind of inner struggle. Read IN A FAR-AWAY GALAXY. It answered a lot of my questions.

Whoops. I'd just assumed there were nine stories all along. Thanks for clearing it up.

Sandra Necchi: (Barb) Glad you changed your mind about Han in TESB. But don't sell ROTJ short. It's really a wonderful film. In my opinion, what happened with Han and Leia wasn't sad, but wonderful. They were slowly but surely coming to an understanding and I think it would have occurred with or without the events on Bespin.

Han is very sweet in ROTJ and I really like him that way. He smiles easily and often, he just seems so happy to be alive, and his joy in Leia is wonderful to see. He isn't afraid to show that he loves her, and is very protective, just as he was in TESB. In the scene on the walkway, when he said, "I'm sorry", he is very vulnerable at that moment, all his defenses are down. He chooses to leave himself open to possible hurt.

(Pam) Come on, people! One of our computer employees is an "India Indian". His only comment on TOD was, "How could anybody take that seriously?" I was in the room with him, I saw the look of disbelief on his face to think people could be so gullible.

Terri Black: (Pam) That's Spinrad's problem, not ours. I happen to be able to enjoy both forms of SF&F.

(Barb) I don't mean to quibble, but Luke saw Yoda first when he returned to Dagobah. (OK, so I quibbled!)

Well, my opinion of Norman Spinrad has dropped several more notches. I read a great deal, but not exclusively SF; I think I can safely say that if not for my interest in SW, I would not have read any SF&F at all. If Mr. Spinrad would prefer that "media" fans (whatever they are) not louse up his Worldcons, I wish he would just say so.

Jeannie Webster: (Barb) You made some very good points on TOD; I only wish I'd thought of them myself.

I think it's neat that the village elder had so much confidence in Indy, whom he'd only just met. Of course, he saw the whole thing as divine intervention ("It was Shiva who made you fall from the sky"). But the final outcome depended on Indy's actions, which could not be pre-determined. So he must have seen something in Indy he felt worthy of his trust, which makes him a pretty good judge of character.

In case anyone wants to know, we think WITNESS is marvelous!

Mind-Games

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April 17, 1985

Greetings, Earth-People!

Just had to throw one of my cats outside. I read somewhere that Poe did some of his best work with a cat looking over his shoulder. If he'd had a cat like T'Poww, we would have never heard of him. When she wants attention, she wants it now! If I push her off, she'll just go and purr in my mother's ear while she wants to sleep. Could be worse. At least Kzin isn't trying to live up to his namesake.

Jeanine Hennig: There could be a point, as a Jedi apprentice gains a stronger potential to manipulate the Force, when he reaches some sort of catharsis, a point once passed through that cannot be passed again. Sort of like puberty; you never go through that twice, do you?

And, yes, I do watch the DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS cartoon show. It's one of the best shows on the air, Saturday morning or otherwise. I just hope to see more quality animation

on Sat. morning. If the EWOKS cartoon show is anything like the Marvel comic, then you can forget about that one. While we're on the subject of Sat. morning programs, does anyone fondly remember LAND OF THE LOST? I hope it's in syndication, somewhere. ((Ed: We get LOTL afternoons in Dallas on one of the independent stations. Of course, being perpetually at work, I don't get to see any daytime TV unless I'm home sick or something. And speaking of good animated shows, how about the venerable JONNY QUEST? That was my favorite show when I was 10 (boy, does that date me, huh?!). I also rather enjoyed THE HERCULOIDS at one point in time, too.))

Barbara Tennison: In the Marvel SW comic, during the years between SW and TESB, they presented something of a robo-phobic society. One character was absolutely stunned, initially revolted, when his droid called him a friend. Cyborgs seemed to be despised, for some reason. I have no idea what could cause such wide-spread attitudes.

Chew on this one. Leia is a partially trained Force-user, but she doesn't know she's trained and isn't aware of what she is doing. What if Bail was either a Jedi or knew enough of the Force to train Leia in some functions of the Force? Leia may only remember some "mind-games" her dad insisted she practice as a child. But those "mind-games" may have helped her communicate and debate (skills that would be of enormous benefit in the Senate) with an effectiveness beyond most people. Her reasoning and strength of will might also be augmented, thus she was able to resist Vader's mind probe. Even if Bail couldn't give her any Force training, he knew he had a special child to raise. I'm sure that he used everything at his disposal to give Leia the best education, training and life experience possible. We know she's a good shot and can ride a mean speeder bike. I wonder what else she can do.

Mary Keever: All you can say about my letter is that it's hysterical? Actually, I was hoping you'd say a lot more. And how do you know Luke's a virgin?

Lin Ward: Who would the Falcon sound like? How about

Lauren Bacall?

Bev Clark: Sounds like God plays dice with the Universe, after all. No big surprise to me. There seem to be enough solid rules to keep things from falling apart, but I'm sure that S/He would be bored with a totally predictable reality. There would be so few possibilities that way.

Mary Urhausen: If I had the technical skills (and I believe I could acquire them), the money and financial connections, and the same creative crew to back me up, then I could make a film as good as STAR WARS. Even with my poor spelling. If it would be as successful is another matter. We should consider, however, that much of Lucas' success may have as much to do with timing as anything else. If STAR WARS had come out five years earlier, or five years later, it might not have struck the same nerve in this country. It was what we needed at the time.

How do I feel about being the only male in this letter-zine? Damn conspicuous, that's how! Like a black dot on an all-white canvas. Sometimes I wonder if this is just a front for some dark, secret amazon society, and that any moment I'll be grabbed, lashed to an altar, and my pancreas ripped out as an offering to some pagan goddess. Other than that, it's quite interesting. To tell the truth, I don't like most men. But the few men that I do consider my friends are fans of some sort of other, and I'd like to see more of them in media fandom.

Debbie Gilbert: I wasn't disappointed in THE EWOK ADVENTURE, but I think it could have been a damn sight better than it was. The acting wasn't so hot, especially the parents. I'm not too sure about the direction in general. Mace was something of a jerk kid, yet he was still presented as something of a hero. Luke Skywalker is a paladin by comparison. And they never did explain how the family got off Endor, if they did. And those "Tinkerbell" creatures were a bit much. This is for the kiddies. ((Ed: I've been a bit puzzled by the lack of comment on TEW. Did anybody out there see it? Or were most of you like me--taped it for posterity's sake, but left the room to do more interesting activi-

ties like fold clothes? Myself, I thought it was pretty badly done, production-wise. The SFX were shoddy, it was too long and drawn-out, and the acting/direction was painfully bad. Opinions, anyone?))

LaVasseur & Brayton: If Luke and Leia were fathered by two different fathers, they are still twins even if they are not precisely fraternal. I once read an article in some science magazine that told of a third type of twins, but I didn't completely understand the explanation. On top of that, someone told me that there are five kinds of twins. Tell me, isn't it possible that the original egg could divide before fertilization? And what sort of twins would they be if they were fertilized by two different fathers?

I think this Shelley Swan stuff is a hoax. If it is, I'd like the originator to stand up and take a bow. It was a masterpiece of weirdness. If it isn't a hoax, then I still want to know if she's on drugs.

Michelle Malkin: Thanks for the tid-bit on Leia's possible use of the Force in ANH. Wish I had read that in time to include it in my LoC to SCOUN-DREL. Brin wanted to know where the clues were that pointed to Leia being the Other Hope.

Kruge struck me as being a washed-up, has-been who was probably a renegade. After the Organian Treaty, I bet half the Klingon Fleet went "renegade," but Kruge may have more of a reason than most. I like Maltz also, and hope to see him in TREK 4. My favorite ST episode is "Devil in the Dark". When I think of all that ST is supposed to stand for, somehow this episode comes to mind.

I've seen the first issue of the Marvel EWOK comic. I hate it. It's in the same league as Richie Rich and Hot Stuff! It really hurts to look at it!

Sandra Necchi: The asteroids in our solar system are not lightyears apart. The Solar system itself isn't a lightyear in diameter. I'm no astronomer, but how do you know that some other system's asteroid field couldn't be considerably denser, especially if the catastrophe that caused it was relatively recent?

Jeannie Webster: Before ROTJ, when I was hoping Luke might take Leia to visit Dago-

bah, I would have liked to have heard Leia say something like, "I hate snakes, Luke, I hate 'em!" or even "Snakes. Why did it have to be snakes?" Then I would have found some way to give Han one of Marion's lines, like "I always knew someday you'd come walkin' back through my door. Something made it inevitable." The obvious implication might cause some fans to adjust their perspective of these characters. (There has to be some reason R2 and 3PO were on the wall of the Well of Souls.) I just wonder what line we could give Luke, just so not to leave him out. Maybe Short Round was Luke, in a past life. ((Ed: How about "You and I are verra much alike!"))

"Fat Chester"? I caught a glance at a young Harrison Ford in an episode of IRONSIDE. He was skinny as a rail. Are you sure it wasn't some other Harrison Ford?

Sonia Blodgett: I also consider Leia is the strongest of character in the Saga so far. That's why I really don't consider her a candidate for the Dark Side. However, she may have one weak-spot--Alderaan. Just how does one deal with the destruction of a planet? Is Alderaan a wound healed over, or is it just so numb that she can't feel that it's infected?

Maggie Nowakowska: I've always had an eccentric reputation. It's what nearly got me killed in high school. I could recount enough anecdotes to fill a book by Paul Zindel or maybe Stephen King but this is a SW/SF letterzine, not Tim's gripe-zine.

I suppose some of you have seen my ad in the back of this zine. What does Tim want with the British SW comics? Well, aside from the slightly different format (larger pages, no color), I've had this project in mind for some years now. Because they are larger and in b/w, they would be easier to blow-up to poster-size, using an opaque projector. Without going into the construction details, I want to go to a few conventions, maybe even Worldcon, as the Marvel SW Comic #38. I've not seen too many comic books in costume competitions as of late. Since no one has answered my ad, I must assume that none of you have the issues I want. But do any of you have any idea how I might

latch onto these particular British comics? I can't reproduce from the regular comic because it just doesn't have the detail I need.

Just saw LADYHAWKE with my mother. I enjoyed the movie as a whole, but my mother is something of an armchair history buff, and she commented on how authentic it seemed to her. Navarre's steed, Goliath, was a true Destrier war horse, or as close as they come in this modern world. Rutger Hauer was about as dashing as they come, Michelle Pfeiffer was radiant, and Matthew Broderick was fun to watch. LADYHAWKE should receive a major Oscar nomination, but anyone want to take bets that it won't get one?

I enjoyed CATSEYE very much, but I know one close friend who hated it. Me, I thought it was about time they did a movie with a cat as the hero. Most cats in TV and movies are either one color or orange tabbies, the reason being that it's easier to find stand-ins that look exactly alike. I think the cat in CATSEYE was a Main Coon cat, one with a very expressive face and superb acting ability.

The only thing I wish they had done differently in BABY would have been to not make the title character so cute. The mini-series SPACE has too much useless space in it; I really don't care who is having an affair with who. Also, I'm not sure about the value of fictionalized retelling of the space program. Coming soon! SPACE II; J.R. Moves to Mars!

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April 22, 1985

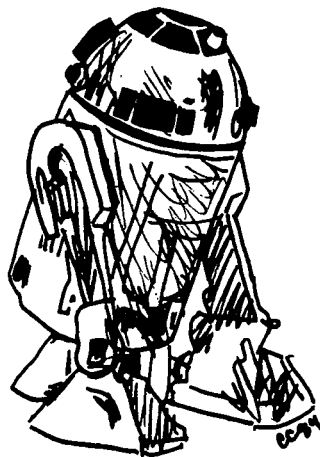
Mary Keever: I recall reading somewhere that Luke's nickname, "Wormie", had been GL's way of drawing yet another parallel between Luke and King Arthur, whose childhood nickname was "Wart." I don't recall if this statement had been made by Lucas, by a Lucasfilm employee, or if it was just a prozine writer's guess at GL's reason for the nickname.

Barbara Tennison: I was very impressed with the way that GL presented his non-human characters as individuals. Adm. Ackbar's reaction to that Star Destroyer's crashing into the Death Star seemed so different from the reactions of his fellow Mon Calimari. As his bridge crew cheered, Ackbar slumped back in his command chair. I couldn't help but think of him as a person who was gentle by nature; a war-weary commander saddened by the cost of victory in terms of sentient lives on both sides. Like you, I found it heartening to see non-humans in high positions. I still smile whenever I think of Luke's surprise as he'd realized that that funny-looking little green guy was The Great Jedi Master he'd been searching for.

Tim Blaes: ROTJ has just been re-released in Philadelphia and, on my latest viewing, I finally spotted the female Mon Calimari. Well, she seemed to be female, but can we be sure that the M.C. share humanoid sexual characteristics?

Who was it who'd asked if anyone had noticed the attention Luke had given his bionic hand while Palpatine was zapping him? (Debbie Gilbert?) Yes, for a moment, it did seem that Luke's artificial hand had been giving him the most trouble in that scene. Perhaps bionic parts are more vulnerable than flesh and blood, and perhaps this is why Luke survived an attack that had killed Vader.

Michelle Malkin: Yoda didn't strike me as warrior material, either. Luke's belief that Yoda had been "a great warrior" had been an assumption, probably based on the fact that Yoda had been Obi-Wan's (a warrior's) teacher. A comparison between Yoda's and Obi-Wan's



attitudes toward war and weapons shows an interesting difference between Luke's teachers. Obi-Wan seems very impressed with lightsabers while, in TESB, Yoda tries to discourage Luke from taking his weapons into the tree cave. Yoda tells Luke that what he takes into the cave is what he'll find inside. This seems to echo the pacifist aphorism, "Live by the sword, die by the sword." Notice which Jedi Master died by the lightsaber and which one died in bed. I'm not trying to make a moral judgment against Kenobi--I think it's often a good and honorable thing to "die by the sword"--I'm just pointing out the difference I saw between Kenobi and Yoda. This difference suggests to me that while all Jedi may have been sworn to protect Galactic peace, their methods of guaranteeing peace and justice may have depended, to some degree, on individual belief.

Laura Virgil: Thanks for a calm, sensible and fair defense of both Luke and Han. You're right, Laura. Although it takes a person of "worth and character" to use the Force in the proper, Lightside way, one need not "have the Force" in order to be a person of worth. Since you'd once been involved in Star Trek fandom, I'd like to ask you a question: Have Spock's telepathic powers and greater physical strength caused any Trek fans to argue that Vulcans are more worthy/more interesting/downright "better" than humans? Has any segment of ST fandom insisted that Kirk possess Spock's abilities, rather than praise the human Captain for all his own fine abilities? In short, is there a Character War in ST fandom that parallels the Luke vs. Han issue? (Sorry, Cheree...I agree that we shouldn't have lengthy discussions of non-SW topics in SE. I'd just like to have Laura's brief answer as to whether or not this parallel exists.) ((Ed: I can answer your question partially, though I'll say first thing that I've been out of ST fandom since 1978 and things may have changed. At one time there was a faction of ST fandom that seemed to think exactly that--that Vulcans were superior to humans in every way, that Spock was the "messiah" of Vulcan, and that Kirk eventually was forced to go to live and study on Vulcan in order to

learn to live the "right" way. It was all based on a series of stories called "Kraith" begun by Jacqueline Lichtenberg. I didn't agree with it then and I don't agree with it now. I don't know if this faction is still active in ST fandom. Does anybody else have input on this?))

Jeanine Hennig: Enjoyed "A Treatise on the Jedi Order". I find my views are very similar to yours, although we'd disagree on one major point. I'd intended to write a long message concerning your article, then decided to wait until you've published Part Two. You might answer my questions in the second part. Meanwhile, thanks for writing an article on a topic that fascinates me.

Regarding your comment (in your letter) about whether or not a Jedi who's "passed his test" is immune to Darkside temptation...I prefer to think that there is no guarantee that a Jedi will remain on the Light Side. I am not among those who see signs of darkness in Luke, but placing him "above temptation" (giving him immunity to the Dark Side) seems to make him more than--or less than--human. I think it's very unlikely that a Jedi who's "passed his test" would fall to the Dark Side, but so long as a Jedi remains a flesh-and-blood mortal, I think it's possible for him to be tempted and to "fall."

Force

Potential

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April 25, 1985

Just a few comments based on SE#6 before I get into #7 at more length (and the editor has a heart attack...).

Maggie Nowakowska: Thanks for calling for more consideration of Leia, especially given what's been revealed about her background in ROTJ. I do agree that the emphasis on her so far has neglected political reali-

ties, but then even for sf fen it's sometimes hard to think about a woman in such a political position and the possible story ideas there. Maybe the influence of Geraldine Ferraro just hasn't been showing up yet (it will show up in fiction and discussion--won't it? Please?!)

Jenni: Thank you for defending Luke's decision to go to Bespin. It might not have been wise in terms of his own training at the time, but morally it was the only thing he could do. Sometimes lessons have to take second place (and as you indicated, what takes first place can turn out to be a lesson also).

Elsie Bartok: The "only a movie" line also seemed to me to be brought up by people trying to tone down the overheated discussions occasionally; there are people in the discussion who get extremely dogmatic about certain points of view and condemn others with different interpretations, which is to my mind extreme overreaction worthy of an important political or religious fracas. It's hardly appropriate for a work of fiction intended as entertainment. Being involved isn't the problem--religious-style fanaticism is.

Danaline Bryant: You quoted extensively from a mainstream sf zine about Maggie and Bev at LACON, but YOU DIDN'T IDENTIFY THE ZINE! PLEASE DO SO, ASAP!

Marlene Karkoska: As far as I'm concerned, you've more than adequately exploded the idea of Han as secret Jedi. Much as I like Han, and wouldn't mind seeing him as a Force-user after the events of ROTJ (one of Luke's recruits?), I've gotten more than a little tired of the secret-Jedi bit--it turns me off reading a story as soon as I see something along that line. Which is a pity, because some of the stories are well done. But they've joined most Imperial stories in limbo, for me.

Melody Corbett: I always assume Luke couldn't see in that helmet because he's too short for it to fit properly (Leia did ask if he wasn't a bit short, after all!). As for Anakin, I figured he meant with his eyes unobstructed by the lenses of the helmet--the lenses might or might not have affected his sight in some way, but if nothing else, they'd be a psycho-

logical barrier, perhaps the equivalent of mirror sunglasses which put a definite wall between wearer and others.

On to #7:

Jenni: In your article you made an excellent distinction between those who have potential to use the Force and those who can concisely use it (or have that potential if properly trained). And I'm sure if you went through fanfic mentioning Jedi you'd find a fairly varied list of talents associated with their use of the Force. Also like your idea of Jedi of the Grey. Seems to me I've seen something mentioned along that line but can't remember where, or even if it was fiction or discussion.

Mary Urhausen: Your suggestion that men might be more sensitive to ridicule as media fen is interesting. In the local sf club, there's considerable disdain for media fen generally, though both men and women are involved in media fandom who are also club members, but the antipathy seems to come more from men than from women (antipathy toward any kind of costuming is also heavily male, in the group, and this concerns sf costumes for stage as well as media costumes for hall or stage. Wonder if there's a connection THERE?)

Sally Syrjala: At first glance I'd agree totally with you about "the ideas of all the peoples (being) treated with care" as a way to peace, but not for long. What about the "idea" that a particular way is the only right way, which not only can but SHOULD be forced on everyone else? Should the Nazi attitudes on racism and antisemitism be given the same care as the open acceptance of all people taught by Martin Luther King? Should Phyllis Schlafly and Jerry Falwell's ideas be given the same cherishing as the ideas of Gloria Steinem and the various clergy who teach tolerance of difference? I don't say these ideas should be censored. They need to be listened to, and they need to be answered clearly and strongly by those who TRULY care about ideas and about people.

Susan Henderson: I'm 40, too, but I've never been an Imperial fan. The only Imperial fen I know personally around here are in their early 20's (one of them is also a rabid Han

fan--and Fordfan generally). How many Mature Fen are out there who prefer the Alliance to the Empire? As for kids considering shots as torture (hence the appropriateness of the droid in ANH)--hey, at my age I STILL consider them torture! As a needle-phobic I cringed with Leia every time I saw that scene!

Thekla Kurth: I agree with you about the Indy films versus SW. Definitely a lot of the fun with SW is the digging and discussion.

Pam LaVasseur and Barbara Brayton: Agree with you wholeheartedly about "terrorist."

Laura Virgil: Bless you for your comments on the importance of the various individuals, and questioning of "having" the Force as determining a character's worth! Also much enjoyed your discussion of Luke as Jedi and what a Jedi is supposed to be. As for the dictionary of references--would LOVE to see one! Any fan or fen out there with the ~~massive~~ interest and time to work up at least a draft version?

Michelle Malkin: The Space Slug or Salacious as the Other ...hmmmm, much as I like Salacious, I think I'd have to lean toward the Slug here. It does have some faint overtone of Shai-hulud and the God-Emperor.

Jeannie Webster: As for the banquet scene in TOD, I took it the way you did, as a tip-off that things weren't right. Indy could be expected to pick up on this. Normally I'm fairly sensitive to racism (at least I think I am), and I didn't see it in TOD--what I saw there was a reasonably modified version of the truly racist films of the 30's. What got to me was the graphic scene of the victim lowered into the lava. It could have been done much more effectively by cutting to faces at the rim with screaming suddenly cut off on the sound track--there's a lot to be said for letting the audience's imagination do the work! But then I'm not a devotee of violent films generally, so what to me seemed overdone might fit right in with what audiences supposedly expect--any comments from viewers of FRIDAY THE 13TH, SCANNERS, etc.?

Terri Black: I didn't read Spinrad's column (I prefer SF CHRONICLE to LOCUS) but it doesn't surprise me. The man

has more than once that I know of expressed contempt for fen in general (not just media fen!). A couple of years ago in an interview in PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, he was so vicious about fen and cons that I wrote a Loc (I NEVER write to prozines!) mentioning two personal experiences of seeing him in action and wondering why he goes to cons if he hates us so (the letter was drastically cut, with no elusions; it did get in most of my defense of fen, though). Really, I don't know what media fen can do about attitudes like this, except as you suggest and show that we not only have brains but also use them. And don't forget that a lot of well-respected names in sf write for TV and films, including Harlan Ellison, Theodore Sturgeon, Tanith Lee, and others. Not all of them have their work massacred a la Bradbury and Zelazny (and Herbert; ~~SANDBOX~~ DUNE was truly one of the biggest disappointments yet, even if Harlan Ellison did lose his usual sanity for the duration of his review in USA TODAY--and at that, the "con" review was so totally ignorant I found myself defending the movie as vehemently as Ellison! There should be some credentials required for reviewing sf films).

(Gee, that wasn't as bad as I thought it would be!)

NOTHING STEAMY: Remember those romantic movies of the 1930s and '40s that only hinted at sex through an unknotted necktie or a languid drag on a cigarette? Director Peter Weir says his latest movie, *Witness*, follows Hollywood's strict moral code of that era in order to capture the feeling of films released then. In *Witness*, Harrison Ford plays a Philadelphia cop who becomes involved with a young Amish widow while investigating a murder. "What I've done is reimpose the Hays Code on myself," said Weir, referring to the strict production code. "In those days, there was considerable film censorship, so movie makers had to be very inventive in the way they showed sexual attraction. It resulted in some wonderfully romantic films." Weir's last film was *The Year of Living Dangerously*.