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As you know, though I am definitely not a new fan, I am relatively new to fandom. This is my first letter to a zine of any kind and I'm a little nervous about writing in the company of so many of you who've known one another and written for years, but, faint heart, etc., so here goes.

First, I'd like to thank you for the explanation of the absence in #7 of the Ladies Brin, Corbett & Stevenson. Having kept up with SE for several months now, I really would have missed them and wondered where they were. Thanks again.

I enjoyed Annie Wortham's article very much. I'd heard before that Mr. Hamill's dancing style was similar to Cagney's (I love him, too, Annie). "Yankee Doodle Dandy" has been one of my favorites since I was a child.

Lin Ward: Enjoyed your comments about Luke's nick-name. I also cringe when I hear "Wormie". How about this theory? On Tatooine, worms are huge, ugly, unmanageable critters and Luke was so named for his aptitude in handling them. Therefore "Wormie" refers to Luke's powers and abilities. Yay! Reaching, huh? Well, maybe, but I like it.

I happen to enjoy all forms of science fiction and was horrified to read about the divisions in fandom with regard to media-fen. It's hard enough to deal with so-called "normal" friends who criticize one for one's fandom interests without having the general sci-fi public doing the same because of one's interest in a certain subdivision of the same group! And now I find that not only is there a rift between media fen and other general sf fen, but some people even dislike one another for their favoritism for certain characters within the same film! Phooie!

Marlene Karkoska: Re your remarks about the downfall of the Jedi--I agree with you that Darth Vader was the only Jedi who actively participated, but instead of actually coming in and destroying them all himself, I wonder if he may have, by using the Dark Side, managed to turn them against one another and set them to fighting amongst themselves until they were in such a state of confusion and turmoil and it was a simple matter for Darth and his men to step in and wipe them out in one fell swoop. I also believe that the Jedi were destroyed from without, not within. As far as your comments on Ben and Yoda's withholding the truth of Luke's parentage from him and the aftermath of same, I couldn't have said it better--or even as well. Thanks! Of course, the Saga would not have been nearly as exciting that way.

Cheree: In answer to your editorial comment in Michelle Malkin's letter about the humor in Han's "I know" line; I think the humor comes in thusly. It's not actual "ha-ha, ain't that funny" but the sort of smiling affectionate indulgency one feels for a well-loved person who reacts to a situation in his own inimitable fashion, rather than in the way most folks would. Every time I see that scene I smile, shake my head and think, "Oh, Han. I know what you mean, but does she?" Anyhow, that's how it strikes me.

Michelle Malkin: Re your remarks about Dark Side immunity--just exactly right! It may be easier to fight the darkness within once one has seen it and knows its face, but the temptations are always

there! By the way, Michelle, being rather new to fandom, I only recently have read the back issues of KESSEL RUN (thanks to a very kind Jenni H.). Can't tell you how very impressed I was and how very horrified to then discover you had stopped publication. Are ya really sure you wanna do that?

Barbara Tennon: I, too, have wondered how someone intelligent and powerful enough to rise to absolute rulership of an entire galaxy could be stupid enough to egg Luke on to the Dark, thereby causing him (Luke) to stop short. Most folks operate on "the harder you push, the firmer I'll stand" level. Really liked your explanation. By the way, I have to display my ignorance for all to see, but what does RAEBNC mean? On age differences, maybe Leia's home, Alderaan, has a longer year than Luke's home, Tatooine, so she would have had fewer actual birthdays.

Marcia Brin: Re your comments on 3PO's caring and generous nature, worrying about the others, etc., it's my understanding that these things are programmed into him. He has no choice but to react the way he does. Marlene K.'s letter in #8 says it so much better than I can--3PO and R2D2, no matter how intelligent, independent, and adorable, ain't people, they're droids.

If I might herein insert my 2 cents' worth concerning the Luke-Han debates currently raging. I love all the Star Wars characters dearly, but Luke is dearest to my heart. This, however, does not mean I automatically cannot love Han too--only that he takes 2nd place to my favorite Jedi. Marcia, you said in your last letter something to the effect that when Luke does it, it's magic, but when Han does it "he must satisfy some scientific/common-place/ordinary reason". I look at it this way: yes, Luke uses magic. It states very clearly in the books and movies that he is a Jedi and has special magical powers that most do not possess. The books and movies do not say the same of Han (not in so many clear and undeniable words, anyhow). I am not one to absolutely deny the possibility that Han may have Force-ability, but until George Lucas (whom I still admire greatly, by the way) tells me so, I believe Han is a very gifted, intelligent, empathic man who acts on his instincts, usually coming out on top, but who cannot intentionally and actively use the Force as Luke does.

I know it has probably been said before, but my personal opinion is that Luke was not actively a part of the military after Bespin and just retained the honorary rank of Commander. I do think Luke acquired a little flavor of the Dark about him but (dare I say it?) this only adds to his charm for me.

Elsie Bartok: In your letter you mention "Lucas' bio of Han". I have never seen this bio. Did Lucas do one for all the characters? Is it in an interview or what? Would you mind letting me know where I could find a copy? I'd really like to see it and any others there might be. Re Marquand's statement about everyone in the film being disguised, perhaps Han's "disguise" as well as Luke's are when they are pretending to be carrying supplies to Endor on the Imperial shuttle. I have read several times that Luke says "Thank you" to Han at the end of Jedi, but for the life of me, after 2-3 recent viewings, I just don't see it. What is Luke supposed to be thanking Han for anyhow? As far as Luke leaving without his "C.O.'s" permission, this doesn't seem to be brought up in the movie. Leia doesn't say, "But you can't go without Han's consent." Han doesn't say, "Where the hell's Luke--how dare he, etc.". This leads me to believe that Luke

is along because he chooses to be, as his own man (or Jedi) and is not under anyone's command. I shudder to think what might have happened had he not left.

I didn't have any problems with ROTJ. In fact, I am one of the apparently very few people who loved it tremendously--every bit as much as Star Wars and more than Empire. I think everybody was absolutely, wonderfully, perfect and I thank GL from the bottom of my heart for what he's given us. (But what have you done lately, George?)

Maggie Nowakowska: Enjoyed your letter. Since I missed most of the Robin Hood episodes, I was delighted to have your Light/Dark explanations.

Jean Stevenson: Enjoyed your Arthurian/SW comparisons, especially was interested to learn the French equivalent of Lancelot. I have intended to write a few paragraphs re the Luke begging subject, but you said most of it for me. "Luke has possible aid at hand, so he called on it." Thanks, Jean. In addition, it is my view that Luke, in asking for his father's help was not only seeing his own death, but that of his sister, his dearest friends, and everything he had spent the last few years of his life working toward. Not to mention the final damnation of his father. Re your comment about the twins' mother possibly being a surrogate to one of them--very interesting idea. All in all, Jean, a really interesting and thought-provoking letter. Thanks again.

Cheree, I handwrote this letter over several days and had no idea how really long it was until I typed it up. Forgive me! I promise to (try) not to do it again. Til next time, peace, folks. And thanks for many long and enjoyable hours.

THE TRILOGY AT WORLDCON

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July 17, 1985

Lucky Anne Wortham! I wish I could've seen Mark in HARRIGAN 'N HART. I saw him in AMADEUS when the show came to LA and that was fantastic. The photos of MWC were fun, Cheree. It's a great idea for a yearly feature.

Like Mary Keever, I think Han and Leia will live happily ever after. I know some feel that Han cannot settle down, but I don't see Leia "settling down" either; after all, she was a leader of a successful rebellion!

Rose Arnold: I got to see the trilogy at Worldcon and in Hollywood. I have to say that I enjoyed myself more at the latter showing. Although the Worldcon event was very exciting, it was a challenge to stay awake 'til the end (even this "night owl" starts to nod off after 4 a.m.). But the March showing was great. It put the fun back in the Saga for me. I'm one of those who was not thrilled with ROTJ at first. But instead of dwelling on the few things I would have done differently, I started to see all the great stuff Lucas gave us in this

story (sometimes depending on your point of view). I'm glad I made the extra effort to see the trilogy again (like working overtime so I could take the day off).

Marlene Karkoska: You gave the best reason why it was wise for Ben and Yoda to hold off telling Luke the truth about his father. Like you said, the information could have destroyed him, but instead he came out a stronger person. It was terrible to put Luke through this, but maybe it's true Luke wasn't ready to hear the truth. What if Ben told Luke about his father when they met in ANH? Luke would have wanted to go to Vader immediately. Ben could tell him that his father's troops killed Owen and Beru, but would Luke believe him? Luke just met this "wizard" and the people he might listen to--his uncle and aunt--are gone. So at this point, Vader could gain a willing student. Luke doesn't know anything about the Force, much less that there is a Light side and a Dark.

Michelle Malkin: I'm glad to hear about older fen. You mean we don't have to stop this fannish activity when we grow up?!

Tim Blaes: I think the hatred of cyborgs in the SW comic comes more from Marvel than from the Saga. I recognize the same sentiment in other titles, while the films show us a society that gets along fine with droids.

Marcia Brin: Whew! Just when I thought it was safe to read SE again...I was glad to see more and more people express my view on Luke and Han. I'm a Luke fan who has nothing against Han--I like him! I think your tirade, though, has taken us two steps backward in the Luke vs. Han argument.

You say that Luke fen are upset with GL because Luke didn't turn out to be the "perfect" hero. Well, I used to be upset with GL because of his treatment of Han! I had no problem with Luke in ROTJ (he was the best part of the movie), but I thought Han was shortchanged. I wanted this to be the perfect movie and how could that be if Luke is the only one with anything interesting to do. Han is important to the Saga, too. It took me awhile to see that a lot happens to Han in ROTJ. He's just not involved with anything as overt as a battle between the Light side and the Dark side of the Force.

Elsie Bartok: Yes, exactly! Han is in disguise, but it's not as elaborate as you seem to imply. Over the years, he has learned not to trust others too easily. So he doesn't allow people to get close enough to really get to know him. Luke is an open book from the time we meet him, but we only see one side of Han in ANH. As he spends more time with the Alliance, we get to know a more complex man during TESB. Then at the beginning of ROTJ, Han realizes that Luke and Leia really do care for him. He knows he can trust them and so the real Han appears by the end of ROTJ.

Of the summer movies, I've seen THE GOONIES, COCCON, and BACK TO THE FUTURE. THE GOONIES was lots of fun and the kids were great, but it was just a junior version of INDIANA JONES. As for COCCON, I expected too much because of all the terrific reviews. There's nothing bad about this movie, except that it's so...nice! My favorite so far this summer is BACK TO THE FUTURE. I don't remember a time travel movie in which the future was actually changed, though.

By the way, has anyone else noticed that Canadian singer, Corey Hart, could pass for a member of Harrison Ford's family? Gorgeous!

I hope everyone is having a great summer! Clear skies!

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I liked the photos from this year's MediaWest. Do you plan to print anymore? Might send you one of myself, assuming I can find one worth printing. May send you one of T'Poww [Tim's cat] instead.

Mary Kever: That SW IV magazine probably had "Star Invaders" somewhere on the cover, didn't it? They sporadically publish various movie rip-offs. They're almost totally bantha pucky, but sometimes you have to admire their style. "Ghostbusters II: Ghosts in Space" and Eddie Murphy was to be included in the cast. But in that same rag was a very interesting article on scenes that were scripted but not filmed or filmed and cut from the series STAR TREK, and their "Terminator II" ran photos and dialog from a scene that was later totally redone from ST:TMP. They also, much to my delight, did a small feature on Kirstie Alley, although I wish they hadn't been so crass as to bill her on the cover as "Spock's Girlfriend--Playboy Bunny." I wouldn't take any projections by these people seriously, but I'm sure Sybil Danning could seduce Darth to the Dark any day of the week, and I think she'd make a damn good Terminator.

Lin S. Ward: CINEMAGIC, a magazine for backyard Spielbergs, has recently started appearing in some bookstores. In one section it lists amateur and student films completed or in production. Some of them look really interesting. You could program a whole convention with films like these.

Marlene D. Karkoska: It is perfectly true that the Rebel Alliance will need the help of some Imperials. This is one of the reasons I'd like to see Leia become Empress; the Empire must be taken over, not overthrown.

Regarding your comments about droids and their place in society, research into Artificial Intelligence suggests that it will someday be possible to create a machine that thinks, makes creative decisions, and be indistinguishable in conversation from a human being. A computer like this will be considerably different from your Apple or microwave. Just how are you going to deal with such a computer? You may own it, but in some countries women and children are considered property. A difference that makes no difference is no difference; a truly sentient mechanical would be a free-thinking, growing, changing, learning individual. How any of us will deal with such computers and robots is something we will find out only when we have to.

This is not to say that I disapprove of Luke's treatment of C3PO. It was tactically a wise move to place the droids in their position. R2 clearly understood what his role was and I still think he was supposed to tell 3PO but didn't.

To Dark Side Zine or not to Dark Side Zine. Well, let me put it this way, I would read a DS zine, but I'm not sure I would buy one. And, although I think I could help plot a DS Leia story, I don't think I'm a good enough writer to pull it off. Of course, a DS zine could print stories that focus on the characters' dark side without them actually falling to the Dark Side.

Michelle Malkin: I'll be going to the Atlanta WorldCon and I'll be wearing various media-related T-shirts. If anybody gives me any lip, I'll be glad to instruct them where they can insert their attitude.

I don't remember any "virulent anti-Han" letters in JW. I do remember some flak over whether

Han was a pirate or not, a debate confused by different ideas/images of what a pirate is--Errol Flynn or Blackbeard. And I was never anti-romance, though I was pro-action/adventure. I merely protested the constant acclaim of Harlequin Romance clones. And I didn't fizzle away on this issue; the Harlequin retreads did (for the most part, anyway).

Ye Editor: I can't speak for anyone else, but I am in fandom for the characters. I just want to see them do something. A story with no plot does a disservice to the characters everybody says they care so much about. Take a good look at SW fan-fic as a whole and you'll see that most of it goes nowhere, or over the same ground again and again. Romance, action-adventure, mystery, horror, humor; STAR WARS/EMPIRE/JEDI had elements of all of these, and undoubtedly others I've overlooked. It is a pity that SW fan-fic is so imbalanced.

If most of the women fans are in fandom(s) just for the hunks, then they remind me of the person who goes to a 31-flavor ice cream parlor and orders vanilla. Sure, Leia and Saavik I find attractive and fascinating. I can leech, too, can't I? But somehow I just can't Mary Sue myself into a love interest for either of these women. I've tried, and I'll probably try again, but it just doesn't feel right when I attempt it.

You women-folk talk about the female to male imbalance in fandom, but I don't think any of you are really bothered by it. None of you are beating the bushes looking for us men. After all, why should you?

The print of ROTJ that I saw this summer was a hunk of junk. Half the reels were scratched almost beyond recognition; it looked like it was raining in the Emperor's throne room. The remaining reels suffered from dropped-out color, everything looking a dull bluish with very little bright color. Whatever happened to Lucasfilm's vow to upgrade theater standards?

Barb Tennison: Have I heard Queen's "39"? Is Dagobah wet? I bought my first Queen album, A NIGHT AT THE OPERA, soon after seeing SW. I caught the lightspeed time disparity angle right off. I am N.C.'s #1 Queen fan (until I can find another, anyway).

Ye Ed again: I wouldn't mind seeing a new JONNY QUEST, with Jonny and Hadji on their own as young adults. But they'd probably do it live-action, like they plan to do with THE JETSONS. And I remember watching THE HERCULEIDS thinking, wow, this has nothing to do with Earth! Neat!

Marcia Brin: Listing 3PO's charitable qualities bears no poor reflection on Luke. His reaction to 3PO when the droid told him to go on in ANH was hardly callous. And Luke's concern for R2 after he was spat out by the swamp monster did not suggest disinterest ("Anything broken?").

The SW universe may indeed be mostly "magical", but I'm not too impressed with your use of this aspect in most of your arguments. "Well, folks, either it's a magical universe or not" smacks of a pat answer for any inconsistency. C3PO isn't a dwarf or a hobbit or an elf; he is a robot and he must work under mechanical principals.

As long as you're bringing up the Tarot, TESB depicted Luke in a very blatant Tarot image--the Hanged Man. The image is not reversed and my book list its divinatory meaning as "Surrender to a higher Being causes a reversal in one's way of life. In spiritual matter, wisdom, prophetic power, self-sacrifice. May also mean suspended decisions, a pause in one's life." Emphasis mine. A fairly

succinct and complimentary description of Luke's development after TESB.

Since Luke and Han are not similar people with similar backgrounds, it would be illogical to assess them by the same standards. Luke has been established as a Force-user and Han has not. As for piloting ability, Luke's performance over the Death Star need not be attributed to his then budding Force potential. You seem to be saying that if anyone in the saga does anything exceptional, it must be attributed to the Force.

You constantly insist that Luke has been over-endowed, or "godhead" as you put it, in SW fan-fic. An odd statement about a Han-dominated fandom. Name names, Brin. List some of these atrocious stories. I suspect that any story where Luke actually manages to succeed in his goals would seem distorted to you.

I object to your twisting of my words. I said that you concluded that your interpretation was the same as GL's or that you would consider him a jerk. I never said that GL was a jerk, although the vagueness of that second sentence was deliberate. First, you insist that your analysis came straight from GL's mouth and now you cop to the fact that he might not see things the way you do, and that all of us see things from our own certain point of view. This is part of what I've been trying to tell you, all this time.

Lucas' quote about Luke's "final turn to the bad side" was vague and of unclear context. The special that it appeared in was constructed to sell the movie, not to probe Lucas' intentions. I want to see the unedited interview. As for Luke's dark clothing, I thought that it was clear that this can mean a variety of things. Not only has GL said that Luke's duds in ROTJ were more Jedi-like, the first McQuarrie portfolio states that Vader is dressed in black, not to denote evil, but to make him more mysterious. "Luke is the one with the problems." The hero of the story usually does; if they didn't have problems, how could they overcome them and be heroic?

I do not dislike GL, and I don't believe the people you label "Luke fans" dislike him either. But I don't exactly consider him the omnipotent filmmaker who produces flawless masterpieces. And then there is this bit about his "brilliance" being evidence for placing Han on a level far above all other characters. Lucas seems so far behind the scenes these days. He doesn't do much hands-on filmmaking anymore.

While levelling accusations of ethical wrongdoing against those who oppose your attitudes, you should examine your own behavior. Your "litmus test" paragraph directly implies that those who do not support you are morally deficient. When you point a finger at me and others, you point three right back at yourself.

First you say that you are not playing a game, then you turn right around and say, "That's your job" to defend Luke. It sure sounds to me as if you regard this as a contest, or rather a courtroom battle. But this isn't a courtroom; this is fandom, and the investigation is being conducted by the jury. You were asked to take a close look at Luke and see something other than the flaws you perceive. Your reply indicates that you are incapable of seeing Luke as a total, complicated human being. You were not asked to change ideas, just to look at the other side of the coin.

If Elsie Bartok wants to see a perfect example of a personal attack, she should simply look at her own first paragraph. It, and a good part of your

letter, was incredibly rude, hostile and abrasive.

What was Han's disguise in Jabba's palace? Why, he was disguised as a wall hanging, of course. Whether Wookiees have a strong Force inclination or not has no bearing on Han's Force ability or lack of it.

I am positive that Han would have been given a thorough medical examination when he got back to the fleet. I'm sure Leia would have insisted on it, even if he hadn't volunteered for a mission. It doesn't matter if he had Force-sight or not, if there had been any damage to his eyes, it could have been detected. Oh, it was nice of you to bring to my attention that, if Lando hadn't warned Han that he was about to blow his head off, Lando might not have been in the rest of the film. If Han needed any instruction on aiming his blaster, then that shoots down any Han-the-blind-Force-user theory.

I can see a clear attempt by both Brin and Bartok to polarize fandom. They try to make this look like "Luke fen vs. Han fen", i.e. Them and Us. Sorry, you two, but there is no conspiracy. The majority of SW fans simply do not agree with you and/or do not really care. Don't assume that a "Han fan" automatically supports your views; I certainly don't assume they do.

Maggie Nowakowska: If all the Jedi who were slaughtered during the Purge went *poof* and turned into day-glo spooks, then why were there not more of them kibbitzing while Luke was on Dagobah? In terms of interacting with the living, just how effective are these blue ghosts? Do you have to be of a certain level before you become one of the Grateful Dead?

Melody Corbett: George Lucas made the film he wanted to make in JEDI. He has said that JEDI was the most satisfying of the three. What Lucas wanted and what we wanted are not always the same thing. I just wish that he'd paid more attention to his characters than to the SFX.

Jean Stevenson: While I do not think IJATTOD was a bad film, I didn't think it was all that great, either. I only saw it once. I did enjoy Rts much, much more. Strange/exotic/dangerous people and places are the staple of adventure films. ((Ed's note: A really good "little" adventure film hardly anyone seems to have seen is NATE AND HAYES starring Tommy Lee Jones. It rips off every adventure movie you've ever seen in your life and has a great time doing it! I highly recommend it!)) Third World countries may indeed contain more than drug dealers, military dictators, and peasant folk, but there are nevertheless plenty of all three in such places. They could have focused on Colombia's other major industries, but I think JOAN WILDER AND THE TOURIST TRAP OF DOOM (or maybe RAIDERS OF THE GOLD-EN COFFEE BEANS??) wouldn't have done as well at the box office. Me, I don't see all that much actual similarity between these two films.

I think I can understand what you have to say about Luke's screaming/begging/whatever. Luke is a young man, Jedi or otherwise, and morality is not something he takes casually. But somehow I just don't worry about it very much. Unlike others, I have no fear that he is incapable of learning. In fact, I have the greatest confidence that he will develop into a splendid Jedi, even if he is a bit inexperienced now.

Yes, I think SW is both a "we" and an "I" story. The strongest groups are made of individuals. Some people are loners, who don't do very well except when on their own. Other types thrive on the group effort. Both Luke and Han started out with one

attitude and found out that they work better with the other.

The most common overall description of the SW saga has been that of an onion. May I suggest another? SW is a Rubic's Cube. But George has moved several of the components around so that, no matter how wildly we twist at this thing, we will never be able to "solve" it.

I don't think the Emperor was half as powerful as he may at first seem. He constantly makes predictions that don't come true. He also failed to detect Luke's presence on Endor. Vader killed him by simply throwing him down a shaft. (I wonder why Vader did that, instead of slicing him into luncheon meat with his lightsaber? It would have been so much quicker.)

A lot of good films have come out this year, so many that I haven't seen a lot of them yet. COCOON hasn't gotten here yet, but I'm confident that it'll be worth the wait. BACK TO THE FUTURE is the best film of the year. My mother usually walks out of the theater with lukewarm reactions or an inability to admit she likes most of the films I take her to; this time she clearly had a ball. Probably had something to do with her growing up in the '50's. I spotted one "flaw": if George McFly ended up being a SF writer, why is it that his house looks like something out of Better Homes & Gardens? Not so much as a Freas print on the wall. I'm not saying that he should have posters all over the walls and paperbacks scattered about, but I swear his home looks like a rich mundane.

EXPLORERS comes a close second, so far. I like the three kids a lot; I wish I had friends like that when I was their age. But I wish the Lori Swenson character had been involved from the start, yet I understand that they clipped out a lot of her scenes. Charlie Drake was a fascinating add-on that they fumbled; he could have been the proof that adults can dream, too, but instead he came off as a little weird. There were so many things about this movie that were unexplored (pun intended) that I suspect they were planning too much ahead for a sequel...or a TV series. The Thunder Road must fly again!

LIFEFORCE probably isn't the cup of tea for most of you. Me, I like things like gothic spaceships, "walking shrivelleds", and London burning in the wake of a "vampire" infestation. Lest you think it was the nubile Space Vampire who held my attention the most, you are at least partially right. I had never before considered that nudity could be so...malevolent. If Mathilda May approaches me in her birthday suit, I don't think I'll stick around to kiss her.

MAD MAX, BEYOND THUNDERDOME: Neither Auntie Entity or Master/Blaster came off totally good or evil. I like that, although I think I sympathize with Auntie's position. Bartertown may have been a wretched hive of scum and villainy, but it was "civilization", and what did Max do? He blew Bartertown half-way to hell and ran off with one of the people needed to help run/rebuild it. The Crack in the Earth kids were fantastic, especially Savana [spell?]. Dr. Dealgood should have had more to do.

Both THE TWILIGHT ZONE and AMAZING STORIES will probably be on the air by the time this gets printed. I want comments! I've always harbored a secret desire to be Rod Serling (anybody remember S*M*A*S*H?) and now Spielberg has a home for all the great ideas he can't stretch into a feature film.

Alright, this is what you've all been waiting for. The Return of the Bride of the Son of Cross-Universe Stories!!!

Mr. Ed meets Francis the Talking Mule; perhaps they are related. Maybe Ed is the son of Francis? ...No, that wouldn't work. ((Ed: Or vice versa?))

The Shadow vs. Cthulhu & Co; Lamont and Margo face off against the Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath.

Ming the Merciless vs. The Little Rascals. Really, I'm serious. Think about it. Ming wouldn't stand a chance. Spanky 'n Alfalfa Conquer the Universe.

James Bond meets Modesty Blaise; 'nuff said. (Do you think I could ever get away with naming a daughter of mine Modesty Blaese?)

Buckaroo Banzai vs. the Visitors; if anyone writes this one, send it to me immediately!!

I don't want to set the world on fire; I just want to light a flame in your heart...

HAS ANTENNAE, TOO!

Sally Smith
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July 29, 1985

Just a quick LoC this time as it's almost deadline, and my mother just informed me she's coming to visit in 2 weeks (aargh).

Annie: Lucky you, getting to see HARRIGAN 'N HART! The best I could do was get a playbill sent to me by a friend who also did. And I must confess to occasionally having antennae, too.

Mary K.: Did you buy that magazine with the SW parody, and if so, can I have some xeroxes?

Tim: Oh, shucks, gang, he's caught on to our human sacrifice plan. Actually, though, you made a slight error. We're really going to sacrifice you, then sell your kidneys, heart, etc. (shades of "Coma") so we can all afford to go to MediaWest next year!

Marcia: Re your comment on Luke fans, "I haven't met one that still likes GL." I get to disagree; you met me at Constellation. I can give you the names and address of others, too.

Jean: I liked the SW/Camelot analogy, especially the "adjustment of the triangle" so it has a happy ending. Nice. Also, good thought-provoking comments on IJATTOD vs. ROMANCING THE STONE.

At Westercon, I actually did NOT inflict bodily harm on Norman Spinrad (gasp--though tempted I was, yes). One day, I was wearing my Jedi costume and stared him straight in the eye, just daring him to make a comment or even have a disparaging expression on his face (go ahead, make my day). He looked away very quickly, so there. I also met some of the people who've written for the D&D cartoon series, and I think the reason some of you out there like it is because they are fans and Our Kind of People.

About Cheree's question regarding the ratio of creator/en to consumers, I am both, being an editor and writer. But no consumer/en should feel inferior about not contributing--without the folks who put

down the money, us zineds disappear!
And I liked WITNESS, too!

CULT OF THE TRUE IMPERIAL

Susan Henderson
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July 24, 1985

Such a richness of topics for discussion in your last issue! It looks as though SW fandom is alive and well; and long may it prosper!

Sally Syrjala touched on an idea that some of my friends and I have also been tossing around, to wit seeing the dark and light sides of the Force as yin and yang--opposites in balance--rather than good and evil. I wonder if Vader subscribed to the yin-yang theory? This would make him a heretic in the eyes of the Jedi, who clearly subscribe to the good-evil interpretation; perhaps Vader's real "crime" in their eyes was heresy. As for Vader not saying he's sorry for his past life, it could be that he doesn't think he has anything to be sorry for. He killed the Emperor to save his son's life; that doesn't necessarily mean he rejected his commitment to the Empire. One regrets again that Vader was never given a chance to explain his politics.

As to Luke's nickname "Wormie," I think Biggs, in the radio show, put his finger on the reason for it when he said, "You will make it off Tatooine, Luke. They know it. That's why they won't accept you." Luke's companions can't understand his longing for something greater than the narrow world of Anchorhead, and like many limited people, they make fun of what they can't understand.

Marlene Karkoska is quite right in observing that the new Republic will probably have to absorb some of the old Imperial officials. After all, too thorough a purge of the losing party will cause bitterness and prolong the civil war. The Restoration in England and the Confederation after the reconciliation benefitted from it. Besides, most civil servants think it's their duty to serve the public, no matter what party is in power, and the Imperials are probably no different from their terran counterparts. As an unreconstructed Impie, of course, I think we're burying the Empire much too soon. Suppose Palpatine's successor is not a Nero or a Caligula (as most fen seem to suppose), but a Catherine the Great or a Marcus Aurelius? The Empire could be in for a renaissance.

Speaking of the American Revolution, it's good to see some more history buffs out there! I didn't see 1776, but I heard the sound track, and "Molasses to Rum to Slaves" had a valid point. My favorite characters of the period (neither of whom were in the musical) are Nathan Hale and John Andre (let's hear it for the secret agents, folks!). Nathan Hale, by the way, also believed in equal education for women; how heartbreaking that such a man should die so young!

I hope I didn't come down too hard on Brayton and LaVasseur in "defending Piett's honor." When I

use that kind of rhetoric, it's almost always tongue in cheek. (One of the things that amuses me about SW is its turgid rhetoric, and sometimes I indulge in a little myself.) You and I have different ways of looking at the Empire, and both are tenable, the more so because we are given so little information about the Empire. For myself, I do not see any evidence for the Empire being corrupt. The Emperor, of course, is in an advanced state of senile dementia. Vader is certainly heavy-handed, but that is not the same thing as corruption. Tarkin does appear to be power-hungry, which is a form of corruption, especially if one goes by the radio show. We are told that Jerjerrod is corrupt, but nowhere are we given proof. This is typical of most of what we are told about the Empire. Allegations in plenty, but little proof. The information we get is filtered through the Rebels' point of view, and they are hardly disinterested observers.

The Cult of the True Imperial was a bit that I wrote for the late lamented Jundland Too; it seemed we had the Church of Ford and the Cathedral of Luke, and Sara Campbell's delightful Right Thinking Persons Who Are For Wedge (in the same zine), so I decided the Imperials simply must get in the game. The Articles of Faith are: 1) A True Imperial thinks the phrase "Rebel Scum" is a redundancy; 2) A True Imperial sees Admiral Akbar and Co. and thinks, "bouillabaisse"; 3) A True Imperial can't understand the controversy between the Church of Ford and the Cathedral of Luke because Luke deserves to be turned over his father's knee and Han deserves life plus 20. Really True Imperials can't tell Han and Luke apart because all Rebels look like to them. As you can see, we are an unregenerate lot. When we really want to snap the Rebels' garters, we tell them our worship service is a champagne breakfast followed by an Ewok shoot. The Ewoks are in no real danger, since everybody knows that Our Brave Clones At The Front can't hit the broad side of a barn.

Chris Callahan: I was under the impression that Imperial fen tended to be older than Rebel fen; perhaps I am wrong. It would be interesting to see a survey on the subject.

May the Force, etc....

MISUNDERSTANDING

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It appears that Cheree and I have both been victims of an accumulation of misunderstandings, starting with my original query to her. When I originally received no response to a private letter to her about the incident, I am afraid I assumed the worst "scenario", for which error I apologize. Cheree and I have, since the last issue of SE, corresponded about the matter and have, hopefully, put it to rest. Again, I apologize for any actions on my part that "added fuel to the fire."

I know I'm going to shock Mickey Malkin to flinders, but Mickey, I agree with you! (Catch that girl before she hits the floor!) Once about Han and once about Luke (though, and I will explain

myself later, I'm not sure why you feel the way you do on the Luke point).

As to Han, I agree that the "I know" was a lovely statement, with multi-levels (though I do think it was funnier than it strikes you). On one level, of course, it could be said to be "typically" Han Solo, and it is: the man who, until he comes out of carbon freeze, is so guarded of his emotions that he turns aside his own feelings with something designed to hide them (for those of you who have seen SILVERADO, there is a point at which the character of Paden, also penned by Lawrence Kasdan, uncomfortable with a story about him that is revealing too much, attempts to divert the listeners by making a joke about the story. A similar device for a character that is similar.) He certainly has trouble admitting to the world at large feelings he has had trouble admitting to himself. On another level, he is saying that she had not had to put it into words (though I suppose it is nice to hear!), he had, despite his inability to speak himself, trapped as he was by all those years of hiding and walling his emotions away, understood. It is only after release from carbon freeze, with all that vulnerability and uncertainty that his mask of arrogance had tried to conceal, that he begins to doubt what he thought he knew, to wonder if he had, indeed, misunderstood.

As to Luke, I agree with you that he has been wrestling with his Dark Side in ROTJ and that he appears to have finally recognized it and, perhaps, faced it down at the end of the film and, further, that he will be faced by repeated "challenges" by the Dark Side throughout his life. This is what I've been saying all along: I never said Luke had fallen or was doomed, or that he was a bad person. What I noted was that he had given the Dark a foothold on his soul and he was being driven by it to do things he would otherwise not do. That he had to face down this element of himself. IF he did not, yes, then it would doom him. Nor did I ever say that he had not recognized at least part of this at the end of ROTJ. My only uncertainty lay in the fact that the film ended five minutes later, so that we don't know how deeply this lesson has taken hold, or whether there will be "backsliding". That, however, is a story for the third trilogy, not this one.

I have also pointed out several times that Mickey's statement about having to remain on guard against the Dark the rest of his life is exactly what Yoda said. "Forever will it dominate your destiny." This didn't mean "fall", as some Luke fans have complained; if he meant "fall", he would have said so. No, he meant that it would always be a monkey on your back, something against which Luke would ever have to be on guard, that "the price of freedom" (from the Dark Side, that is) is eternal vigilance."

Those of you familiar with the Luke in my stories know I don't dislike the character; I simply don't like what he is doing and what his attitudes are in ROTJ. Again, I ask: haven't your parents ever criticized you or gotten angry with you for things you've done? Did it mean they didn't like you? Or that they liked you so much, they did not want to see you destroying yourself? To me, those fans who are more concerned with saving their private universes, spun up since ANH, than the actual characters as given to us in ROTJ, they are the ones who don't really give a damn about Luke, no matter how loudly they proclaim themselves to be Luke fans.

However, Mickey, what I can't figure out is how

you got there. I know how I did, but I can't figure out your route. I've been critical of Luke's behavior and attitudes, I see them as wrong, not because I think Luke is bad, but because I think that they are external manifestations of the internal problem, signs that, for a time, the Dark Side of Luke was propelling events. You, on the other hand, have been saying that everything Luke has done has been right, that I was wrong in my criticism. You haven't, in fact, been critical of anything Luke has done in ROTJ. Well, then, if Luke has done everything right, if his behavior has been good, kind, sweet, pure of heart and moral, then where on earth do you see any signs of a Dark Side struggle? Where is the evidence for such an event? How unfair you make this universe if Luke can be perfectly good and still be struggling with his own evil. If he can do all things right and still end up with nothing at the end of ROTJ. My feeling is, ROTJ ends the way it does because it shows to where Luke's failure to recognize his Dark Side sooner has brought him. Hopefully, he will only go up from here.

Tim Blaes, some issues back, inquired whether we were saying that Luke and Han were brothers. Well, Tim, I obviously cannot give you the ultimate answer to that question, but I can point out two things. The first is that, according to people around GL, he never throws an idea away and, if you recall, one of his early ideas was the story of an older brother coming to get his younger brother, who has been living on a farm, and then the two of them going off to find their father.

The second has to do with some very intriguing and carefully hidden dialogue in the Death Star scene--

(Before going any further, since I know what any number of people are going to say in response to this, why don't I say it and get it out of the way? "I ran shrieking to my tapes and I didn't hear it!" There, don't we all feel better? Far be it from me to point out that the fact that you did not hear it does not mean it isn't there. I've never been introduced to a neutron, but that is hardly grounds upon which to dismiss its existence. It should be noted that shrieking, which so badly interfered in someone's ability to even see what I had once referred to in a letter, will most definitely get in the way of hearing the dialogue. There is also, of course, the fact that any number of the people who make this claim don't want to hear it, which is sufficient in and of itself.

You will need something with an excellent sound track, preferably the film itself, though you'll need a quiet theater. There are multiple sound tracks and this dialogue has been carefully overlaid.

I will point out that, if I were the only one to have heard it, I would be suspicious myself, but too many other people have heard some or all of it, including some people who did not want to hear it, among that number being Luke fans and Han fans who always took ROTJ on the surface. Okay, now, where was I before I so rudely interrupted myself?)

--that adds a whole new dimension to the film. And certainly adds some spice!

I've raised these in SCOUNDREL, so for those of you who get both zines, please excuse the repetition. Anyway, the first piece of dialogue comes up when DV is pulling his tennis-match routine. Just before Vader decides to act, Han's voice comes up, shouting, "Father!" in a peremptory tone. Vader then acts.

The second piece of dialogue--and, by far the

hardest to hear--comes scant seconds later as DV swings the Emperor up. Again, Han's voice, very rough, shouting "Save him, Father" (it should be noted that this dialogue makes absolutely no sense if spoken by Luke. Who is he urging Vader to save? The Emperor?)

The last piece--and the easiest to hear--comes several moments later, after DV throws the Emperor over. Vader collapses and Luke pulls him back. There is a bit of Vader's heavy breathing--a purely mechanical sound--followed by James Earl Jones' voice saying, "Han". He pronounces it the same way Lando does.

Interestingly enough, you can often hear it better if you are not in the same room as the film, i.e., if you are just listening. There is an echo chamber sound to some of it, especially the original "Father."

Well, I said it was intriguing, yes? Is it, as Tim Blaes asks, a case of brothers or half-brothers? Is Luke, as Yoda tells him, Vader's son (and Yoda, while he will not volunteer information, has not lied to Luke)? If so, this leaves Anakin, the man who presumably left his lightsaber for a son he didn't know he had (if Luke is supposed to be his son). Perhaps, instead, which would make more sense, a son, older than Luke, that he did know he had (this, in addition to avoiding the absurdity of saying he didn't know about offspring on the one hand and left his saber for his unknown son on the other, avoids the obvious sexism of his leaving a saber to his son, but not his daughter).

There are, of course, other story possibilities attendant on this dialogue (let me say right off the bat, that I will not buy any explanation based on the Moronic Moviemakers Theory currently popular with some Luke fans). It adds, if nothing else, greater complexity to a character already the most mysterious of background. It is interesting that, with the ROTJ storybook, Lucas, for the first time openly has Luke wondering who Han is. If it were as clear as some Luke fans maintain, there would be no need to raise the issue.

To a more serious topic: if you recall, I indicated that, perhaps, ROTJ was a moral litmus test for the audience. We had somewhat of an example last issue, in which Luke's actions toward 3PO were defended on the ground the 3PO, after all, isn't as important--special?--as Luke. I mean, are we trying to say that 3PO is Luke's equal? Ah, so now we get into the realm of superior/inferior people. This is exactly the reasoning that supported slavery, apartheid, discriminating against women, and marching people into gas chambers, not to mention being the *raison d'être* behind the Leopold-Loeb murder. Some people are simply inferior, right? Little more than animals, after all, right? Or childlike. Or incapable of clear, rational thought. Or, or, or, or. And those superior people (and races) have the right to treat these inferior specimens anyway they chose, right?

Wrong. And Lucas thinks so, too. That's why he doesn't market in South Africa. That's why this incident is in the film, to point this up. That's why he has Han refuse to volunteer Chewie even though no one in the world thought Chewie would not go where Han went, to emphasize the treatment of 3PO, whom GL equates with Chewie as his minorities.

More, though, it is one thing for a character, who is at a certain point in his real life, "hag-ridden", with the Dark Side cracking the whip, a character who can ultimately defeat this part of himself to do this. It is another for the audience,

in the real world, to support this action and to defend on the very ground that Hitler used. At the very least, it calls for a severe examination of priorities.

One last comment. Some people writing SE are using its pages to attack other letterzines and editors. I've said it before: no letterzine is a proper forum in which to criticize other zines. If you have a gripe with an editor, raise it where she/he can defend herself/himself. To do otherwise is cowardly.

HAMILLFEN

Lynne Kennedy
Lorie Thompson
Jenny Lyn Catanzarro
Smithtown, New York

I see that Annie finally made it to the front page. Maybe now she'll stop complaining. She really didn't seem to have much to say, though. I would have liked more on HARRIGAN 'N HART and less of Annie's Adventures Among the Mundane New Yorkers. She was right on about the subway system. It is, to borrow from Joseph Papp, the "epitome of the pits."

I feel lucky, too. I saw HARRIGAN 'N HART seven times, including twice the weekend it closed. It was a bit disappointing that Mark wasn't able to spend as much time chatting with us as he usually does. I can remember one night during the run of AMADEUS when he spent twenty minutes with us outside the Broadhurst Theater even though it was after midnight and he had done two strenuous performances that day. Unfortunately, the powers that be decided to open HARRIGAN 'N HART on Broadway in the middle of the winter...a bad mistake. I am convinced that, had the show opened in the spring, it would still be running. At any rate, considering the rotten weather and freezing temperatures, none of us who know Mark felt the least big slighted that he had to play the Artful Dodger after each performance. We were far more concerned for his health (with good reason) than with nagging him for yet another autograph or picture. It was satisfaction enough to sit in our habitual front row seats (the stiff neck was worth it) and get that little glance of recognition as we let Mark know we were there to give our support.

When we first went to see the show on January 12, we really didn't expect to see Mark at all between performances. The weather aside, a lot of actors barely have time to grab a bite to eat and take a short nap before the evening performance. We were more interested in renewing acquaintances with the other cast members, delighted that most of the original Goodspeed cast had been retained. So, we were surprised when Mark did step out into the alley for a few minutes to sign some autographs before retreating back into the theater. One of our little group ran after him, not to thrust a program into his hands for his signature, but to give him a little bunch of flowers and, speaking for us all, begged him to "Take care of himself". That's the difference between a "fan" and what Mark

calls his "people."

By Tuesday night, Mark's voice sounded raspy and took a long time to warm up. Mark was obviously at a disadvantage with his comparatively untrained singing voice and the strain was beginning to show. We were glad when he snuck out the front door while everyone else was milling about the stage door. While we were showing Michael Stewart some of the photos I had taken of the Goodspeed production, he told us that Mark had been instructed not to stand out in the cold talking to people. With opening night a couple of weeks away, they were taking every precaution. We understood but there were a few people who grumbled and muttered, who had come a great distance just to see Mark, and who does he think he is?, that sort of thing. We tried to explain the circumstances and told them to try again when the weather got nicer (how were we to know the show would fold in less than a week?), that Mark usually does spend a lot of time with people after a show. Why, on one occasion when I took my nephews, aged 6 and 5, to see the show in Connecticut, the man directing us where to park saw the boys, leaned in the window, and asked, "Are these fellas here to see Mark?" Somewhat taken aback, I said yes, and he told us where to wait for him after the show. He wouldn't have done that without Mark's permission and the "fellas" have never forgotten Mark's kindness that night.

I guess Annie's article just rubbed me the wrong way because, while I enjoy reading SE, I have never felt compelled to contribute to it until now. As much as I loved the STAR WARS films, I cannot bring myself to discuss them with the same seriousness that I would the films of Francois Truffaut. But I showed the last issue of SE around and asked, "Does this sound like Mark?" The answer was a resounding NO. Sounded more like Harrison Ford to us. And not one of us has ever seen Mark with a bodyguard, either. I've seen him leave the theater alone, I've seen him leave with Marilou, with his mother, his cousin, with Michael Stewart, with one of the other actors in the show, but never with a bodyguard. As a matter of fact, on that last Saturday the show ran, while I stood outside the theater waiting for one of the cast members (I surprised myself by asking him out to dinner and he bowed me over by saying yes), I watched as Mark left the theater--by himself--and walked right through the crowd and into the pub next door without anyone giving him a second glance. I was the only one who recognized him. As much as I wanted to express my sympathies, I didn't because I did not want to draw attention to him. Happily, I got to say my piece in the end after I used some telepathy on my dinner date and he suggested we eat in the same pub. I guess what we want to say is that Mark has always been very generous with his time with us. It is really amazing what a "Please" and a "Thank you" and a "That was a great performance" can do. We understand the special problems Mark was facing with HARRIGAN 'N HART and felt they should be mentioned, since Annie didn't bother to.



Jean Stevenson
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July 30, 1985

I'm hurrying this because I want to meet your deadline, and as I said to Judi Grove, I think she deserves a public apology. SOUTHERN ENCLAVE's readers should know she wrote me privately to protest what I said in SE#8 about invading Harrison Ford's privacy--and in conjunction with an unhappy notice of her article about meeting him around the set of WITNESS.

Please print this and my letter to her.

Dear Judi,

I got your letter today and had to respond immediately.

First, I want to offer my unreserved apology for having hurt you. If I had used the time delay I claimed to need to good purpose, I might have realized that your article did not deserve to be connected to any comments I had to make about inroads on Harrison Ford's privacy. Indeed, your article makes it very clear--as does your letter--that he was on his finest public behavior while filming in Pennsylvania.

My point was that actor-watching and a lot of the craziness that goes with it (did you see the mob scene at Cannes; do you know about the people who camp on folks' lawns?)--does seem to be, at best, confusing and, at worst, out of place in the letterzines.

But while I feel the point needed to be made, I should have used a rapier, not a broadsword. As it was, I hit a friend and probably missed my real and only legal targets.

Your article was beautifully and lovingly written and, I have no doubt, may have helped some readers--who've only considered Ford as a body, an object wandering through the camera frame see him as a real person, an actor who brings a lot of self to his craft, and, not incidentally, to some very popular characters.

Again, I'm so sorry for the hurt I've caused, the shadow I must have put over a very happy memory. If I may take my cloud away with me, I wish you all joy in that remembering and thank you for sharing it with us.

Now, one reason I've written so quickly is that the deadline for SOUTHERN ENCLAVE is in two days, and I want to get this in the mail to Cheree. You see, I think you deserve a public apology. I'll include to you a copy of what I'm sending Cheree. If for any reason you don't want it printed, write her first to pull it and I'll back you--if this gets to her in time in the first place.

Now, you be careful out here among the English.
Pax, Jean

The only other thing I'd say is that my objections to the Hollywood Boulevard star are now moot. VARIETY announced in its June 12 issue that Ford would be among those being so honored this coming year. However, I will restate the fact that both in print and quoted in a syndicated TV show as mentioned--which I have on tape--Harrison Ford did say he'd just as soon have the one star stand for both actors. Maybe he's just modest and didn't want to fall from too high a place.



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July 27, 1985

Well, I've been found out. I knew it was only a matter of time before my evil cohorts and I were revealed for what we are: moral accommodationists. Yes, I admit it: we have failed the moral litmus test, as one perceptive reader has discovered. Moreover, another equally perceptive reader has also uncovered the dastardly plot to intentionally misdirect the letterzine's readers. My congratulations to these readers. I thought we had covered our tracks sufficiently, but they were too sharp for us. I apologize to the rest of fandom for inflicting our nasty evil selves on you. I promise I will spend at least the first third of eternity meditating on my sins--inbetween worshipping the one ~~god~~ true god, of course.

Furthermore, so that the morally righteous among us will recognize us deviationists before we threaten their purity, I propose that all ~~LUKE~~ fans wear a distinguishing mark of some sort. Perhaps a T-shirt in basic black, the color worn by such other evil types as Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox priests and Moslem Imams, emblazoned with the mark of our shame: I FAILED THE MORAL LITMUS TEST, perhaps, or MORAL ACCOMMODATIONIST.

On a serious note, I want to address a point made in one of these letters. Marcia says she hasn't met one Luke fan that still like George Lucas. There are two things to say here. The first is that such absolute arguments are dangerous, because it takes only one counter-example to prove them wrong. I'm willing to offer myself as the counter-example. Of course, I don't identify myself primarily as a Luke fan; I like all the characters, but I particularly like the gestalt of SW, the whole of it. So maybe I don't count. But I could give you other names--Maggie Nowakowska, for instance. (But I forgot; she's not a Luke fan primarily, either.) Carol Mularski. Lisa Cowan. (Oh, but she doesn't count, I suppose: she's not an active zine media fan.) The second point is that from what I've read in the letters of those people who don't care for GL, their dislike has nothing to do with whether or not Luke is the hero of SW, or whether or not he's "perfect." It seems to stem from what they see as overconcern with merchandising and money. Whether or not that is an accurate perception (I disagree, as I believe I've stated before), it's independent of GL's treatment of Luke in SW. These people are disappointed in George Lucas, not in Luke Skywalker.

While I'm in this area of SE, I'll also address one point in Elsie's letter, if Maggie will forgive me for interpreting her words. What Maggie said was not that logic is interchangeable, but that logic does not equal truth. Logic is a means, not the only one, of determining truth. One of the reasons logic doesn't equal truth, and isn't the only means of determining it, is precisely that logic is inflexible. It is also limited in scope. It does not apply, for instance, to emotions (Mr. Spock to the contrary).

Now to backtrack somewhat--

Several people mentioned that perhaps Bail Organa was a Jedi. I could buy this only if, as Mickey Malkin suggests, he was a "secret" Jedi. Otherwise, he'd be much too visible, as the viceroy of Alderaan (admittedly, this information, and even

Bail's name as Leia's father, are not from the movies), to have escaped destruction with the rest of the Jedi. He'd also be too potentially dangerous to the nascent Empire to be allowed to live. If he had any Jedi training at all, though, it's very plausible, as Tim Blaes said, that he would have taught Leia certain things. Not necessarily particularly "Jedi" things--that would be dangerous for Leia, and especially so once she became involved in the rebellion and her chances of meeting Darth Vader increased--but things such as Tim suggests: how to "influence" people, how to block a mind probe, maybe even how to lie convincingly (trained intelligence agents today are taught how to block lie detector tests, for instance). I'm assuming, by the way, that because Darth Vader never suspects her of having Forceful abilities, let alone of being Anakin's daughter, that there was nothing about her--no aura, no "signature"--to suggest Jedi to him.

Another subject that came up was whether or not Han is a Force user or a Force sensitive, even if he isn't a Jedi. Personally, I've always thought that he was an unconscious user of the Force. That was part of the point of the scene in ANH where Obi Wan tells Han, "In my experience, there's no such thing as luck," i.e., the Force is acting on Han, too. Han may consciously disbelieve in the Force, and perhaps be unable to use it deliberately, but he could still be able to manipulate it for navigation and general "luck," as long as he believes he's doing something else. There's precedent for this in the real world.

I second Marlene Karkoska's idea that the Jedi are likely to work with, rather than for, governments. Working for a government (as a police force, say), could put the Jedi into a position in which the government they represent asks them to do something they disapprove of, or does something unethical. They would maintain their credibility better as an independent, self-policing organization, though they would also be more vulnerable to criticism and propaganda should public opinion or the government turn against them. I suspect that this may be the sort of relationship Luke is already establishing with the rebel alliance; at least, one could make a case that he is (as Maggie Nowakowska has in her stories). How the new government will accept this depends partly on if and how the Jedi were connected with the fall of the Republic. If the Jedi were generally incorruptible, as Barbara Tennison suggests, independence may be acceptable for the new Jedi.

Back to "incorruptibility" for a moment. Assuming Barbara is right and a Jedi fallen to the Dark Side was rare: perhaps the Emperor did try to corrupt the Jedi at some point and destroyed them only when they would not be corrupted. I like Barbara's idea that Darth Vader is such a singular figure because he almost alone of the Jedi was corruptible; the usual fate of traitors is to be discarded after their usefulness ends because a person who has betrayed once cannot be trusted not to betray again. Of course, Darth Vader's situation may be unique. That is, he was corrupted, but his corrupter and master is an extremely powerful Force wielder, who holds Vader (and perhaps encouraged his betrayal) by fear. Even if Jedi are usually incorruptible, the influence of such a wild card, who is perhaps not a Jedi himself, may never have occurred before in the Jedi's history.

Yet I'd find it hard to believe that Jedi were completely immune to temptation from the Dark Side, or even that they are immune if they have once suc-

cessfully countered the temptation. They would be inhuman (in the figurative sense of the term) if that were the case. I think rather that after the first major temptation (which I would think all Jedi must face), they would be less likely to fall through hubris--thinking themselves immune or strong enough to overcome any temptation--and more able to recognize the sources of temptation in time. That is, they'd be less likely to fall, though not completely unlikely, but the price might be constant awareness of the Dark Side, not to mention the sobering knowledge that they too are susceptible. The fall of a full-fledged Jedi through the 1,000 generations might have been rare enough that Barbara's idea about Vader's singularity would still work.

In the matter of droids, I hold a position similar to Marlene Karkoska's. (If I'm already condemned as a moral accommodationist, what's another circle lower?) I work with and write about artificial intelligence researchers, who are actually trying to create "intelligent" computers and robots. ("Intelligent" is in quotes because one of the hot arguments in the field is over the definition of intelligence, especially as applied to computers.) At some time in the (very!) distant future, they might produce something of the complexity of R2D2 and C3PO; there are also those in the field who say it's impossible. Yet even in the case of such nearly human robots, everything about it is as much determined by the intelligent beings that created it as are the characteristics of a landspeeder. The robot or droid knows only what it has been programmed to know; even if it can learn, it learns only to the extent, and in the manner, its programming allows it to. Its "free will" is limited by the extent of its programming. So are its emotions (whether they are "real" emotions or simply mimicry of "human" emotional responses to certain stimuli is another philosophical question). I could not regard as my moral equal a mechanical being whose moral choices depended on a program written by some intelligent biological being no better or worse than me. I would have deep qualms about giving the vote to a robot or droid that might be instructed by its program to vote in a certain manner. As long as robots or droids are totally dependent on their biological creators or programmers for their individuality and so on, they are slaves in the deepest sense, and I see nothing wrong with programming them to function as servants or with treating them as such. Or with sending them into danger; one of the reasons we make robots today, which I imagine will not change, is so that they can do those things that would endanger living beings.

Things would not be so simple, of course, if it were known exactly what were the essence of "humanity" (or "speciesshood" for any other intelligent species) and a droid could be programmed with whatever that was; that is, if a droid's brain were essentially no different from our own and it were "programmed" the way we are--slowly and uncertainly over the course of many years. All sorts of questions would arise then, not only about droids' nature and rights but about those of biological beings. Which category the droids in SW fall into is uncertain. There's some hint that they are programmed (it's unlikely that 3PO could have picked up 6 million languages and dialects by learning the way biological beings do without an existence measured in thousands of years). There is also no question in anybody's minds in the movies but that they are servants, in fact that they are objects to be owned. The only question seems to be how they are regarded.

In general, the Imperials seem to pay them no attention at all (so far as we can see); the "good guys" treat them as something between appliances and pets.

Of course, Barbara Tennison is right that gravity is just another aspect of the Force (or the superforce, in my original context). It was the first force known, in fact. In relation to SW, gravity alone comes close to fitting Obi-Wan's original explanation to Luke; add the other three known forces (electromagnetism, strong, and weak), and you have something like the Force in SW. And, I'll bet, inadvertently on GL's part.

The problem with Luke and Leia's ages doesn't arise if you take only the movies themselves as "gospel" for future movies, as their ages are never given or hinted at on screen, only in the "alternate" sources. And there is the other factor that maybe GL changed his mind about their relationship midstream--he certainly did that with other things, e.g., Obi-Wan's death and even Luke's name (Luke was Luke Starkiller until roughly halfway through the shooting script).

By the time the next SE appears, we'll probably know what the art in the Ewoks and Droids animated cartoons looks like. I haven't been too impressed with the stills I've seen, I confess. On the other hand, Nelvana, the animation studio doing it, has a good reputation. It is doing or was going to do (I don't know its current status) the Elfquest movie. A correspondent involved in Elfquest fandom told me that the Pinis chose Nelvana because it will only accept projects when (1) it believes in them and (2) it will be able to do a good job by its own definition. This is at least a hopeful sign, though I still don't expect anything of the caliber of, say, THE SECRET OF NIMH. I imagine the stories will be aimed at fairly young children, especially on EWOKS, but that's not a bad thing. Virtually no one is doing movies or TV shows for the littlest viewers (whereas, in contrast, there is a large industry producing written material for young children), and the Ewoks in particular may fill that niche. ((Ed's note: There is the possibility too that the two shows will elaborate on the SW universe or even the characters, especially in the DROIDS sequence. This was done with the STAR TREK animated series, which introduced a number of facts and concepts that were incorporated into the "canon" of that universe.))

If fans have argued that GL tried too hard to please everybody with ROTJ and ended up pleasing no one, as Melody Corbett suggests, the argument makes sense only if "everybody" is defined as "SW fans." He pleased the general audience to the tune of \$330 million, which is not only a lot of tickets but a lot of repeat business as well. It's also not a whole lot less than ANH made (\$400 million) and more than TESB (\$290 million or so). From everything I've read, it appears that the main person GL tried to please was himself--which is all any artist ever does: be true to his or her own vision. (Within the restrictions of the collaborative effort a movie is; GL was not even solely responsible for the story of ROTJ.)

And then there is the matter of SF fandom and its relation to media fandom. Interesting that the subject comes up here, too, because it has been a topic in SF fanzines for a couple of years now.

SF fandom is different from media fandom in many ways, though there is a broad similarity in the forms the fandom takes and in some of the characteristics of the fans themselves. For one thing,

SF fans are largely male while media fans are overwhelmingly female. Why is anyone's guess, though I think Cheree has part of the answer in her suggestion that there is a certain amount of movie-star fandom in media fandom, and that has never attracted males. It's certainly nothing as simplistic as men (SF fans) preferring action/adventure and women (media fans) preferring characters; the most vitriolic anti-media SF fans tend to be just those who dislike action/adventure SF and press for more sophisticated, character-oriented SF. Then there are the differences in SF fanzines, which rarely contain fiction, except of the "fannish" (in-group-ish) variety. Those few that do contain fiction are regarded with contempt, as most fans feel that there are enough paying markets for SF that anything publishable could be sold to them, so that anything published in a fanzine is likely to be what is un-publishable, i.e., awful. The fact that media fanzines are almost entirely fiction is one reason why some SF fans regard us with contempt. Their opinion is inappropriate in media fandom because of different circumstances, but they carry it over anyway - mostly because they have never bothered to actually read a media fanzine. (Admittedly, some have and still dislike them.)

But then, some SF fans regard us with contempt anyway and merely seize on fan fiction as an excuse. Explain its role in media fandom, and they'll find something else to dislike. Reason doesn't have a whole lot to do with it, either, where the die-hards are concerned, nor does knowing media fans personally. At most the die-hards will allow that an individual media fan is "different" or not really a media fan, at all. I have an acquaintance, a medium-BNF in SF fanzine fandom, who knows not one but several active media fans and has for 10 years. He still dislikes and refuses to understand media fans in general. One can see the same attitude in the lettercolumns of SF fanzines.

There have been attempts to explore the antagonism, both in those lettercolumns and at conventions, but they don't seem to have changed anyone's mind. (Informal meetings have had better luck.) At one con--Orycon in 1983 a panel of SF and media fandoms was scheduled, but none of the SF side bothered to show up. At others, people have talked to each other. (Things may come to something of a head next year at Norwescon, the local [Seattle] SF con. The new chair is reported to be strongly opposed to any media-fan participation in the con and to dislike media fandom in general.)

I think the major part of the difficulty the two sides have had in communicating is that the antagonism is irrational, and it may be one-sided. That is, while there are media fans who are ignorant of SF fandom, there are few (that I know) who hate SF fans and fandom the way the die-hards in SF fandom hate media fandom. But then, they don't threaten us, and we do threaten them, however unconsciously the threat is perceived.

For one thing, we threaten the status of the BNF's--media fans don't know who they are, and, worse, don't care. Something they love is also threatened: not just SF, but written SF, and maybe writing (and reading) in general. No matter how literate media fans are, the fact that their primary loyalty is to visual SF is threatening to those who love the written medium. And this threatens their future, because they see so many more of us than of them, and most importantly, they see that the new blood is not coming into SF fandom but into some form of media fandom, though not necessarily what

we would recognize as media fandom. The average of the readers of the general-circulation SF fanzines is going up one year every year; the absolute number of fanzines is down; the number of fanzines by new comers is down even further; and some of the newer members of SF fanzine fandom are not the traditional teenagers but people in their 20's and 30's.

So what do I suggest? First, to understand the background (some of it) of hostility to us, and not to assume an antagonistic attitude. Not all SF fans dislike media fans; in fact, most don't. It's just that the ones who do are so loud about it! Don't deprecate SF fandom and if you don't know much about it and happen to be talking to a SF fan, admit it and whatever you do, don't compare it unfavorably with media fandom to his face. Discuss the subject as rationally as possible; this in itself may be a pleasant surprise to the SF fan (though SF fans are not necessarily rational themselves, as the vicious battles over the SF fan funds recently showed). Agree with any valid criticism the fan makes of media fandom, or at least try to explain it calmly without coming off like a fanatic--another stereotype SF have of media fans. Realize that you are most likely not going to convert the most rabid anti-media fans, no matter what you do. At best, you may convince one that you are one of the different fans.

And take Norman Spinrad with about 5 pounds of salt. The man speaketh with forked tongue, as they say. In one breath, he will decry the way media fans have taken over SF cons and introduced celebrity worshipping into "egalitarian" SF fandom, and in the next complain that SF cons don't cater sufficiently to SFWA members. Also, his preferred style is passionate, which tends to exaggerate the force of his argument. However, it also makes him amusing, if infuriating, to watch in action. Any panel with him as a member is guaranteed to be lively at the very least.

Well, Cheree, that is it, and boy, are you glad. I'll bet! This is just barely going to make your deadline, I suspect.

UNDER-THE-WIRE AWARD

Mary Urhausen
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July 31, 1985

Omigod, I'm doing it again! I can't believe it--this time I swore I was going to get a letter in to you in plenty of time (after all, I read SE#8 months ago, marked all the letters I wanted to comment on, and was in general all prepared and fired up...and then promptly buried the poor thing under the tons of detritus that accumulate in my room!). If Annie Wortham and Jenni Hennig are regularly competing for getting their letters in SE first, can I start a competition with someone for getting mine in last??! (We could call it the Under-the-Wire Award.) ((Ed's note: Winner this issue is

Jeannie Webster, whose letter was so under the wire for last issue that it got in this issue! Time, tide and SOUTHERN ENCLAVE wait for no fan!))

I loved the section of photos from MediaWestCon! But I think you have mistakingly identified Judi Grove as Marci Erwin [they may live together, but they definitely are not the same person!]. And fie on you for not knowing who Eric Larson is! [A great guy, who personally escorted me through the most dangerous part of "Hall Wars" one night in the Hilton!] I am not at all offended to have been overlooked in your photo section, as I am already known on sight to hundreds of MWC-goers as That Whacky Woman Who Spends So Much In the Art Auction; or, now, as One of Those Two Wacky Women Who Removed John Hennig's Jeans During the Art Auction! Ah, so much fame, so little time...! ((Ed: Apologies to Judi and Marci for the mix-up; I think I only met them once and they were introduced as "This is JudiGrove&MarciErwin." For those folks whom I overlooked in the photo section, be aware that these pictures were from my personal picture taking, most of which included Annie Wortham, Liz Sharpe and Lois Indelicato going bananas in the room, or the costume contest, or various and sundry pix that would only have meant anything to me. If any of you would like to share some of your con photos, please drop me a note and we'll discuss it.))

Mary Keever: I cast one vote with you for Han and Leia remaining together (so I'm a hopeless romantic, too!)--although not necessarily "settling down." For an idea of what I mean, see Liz Sharpe's excellent story in SOUTHERN KNIGHTS--I loved it!

Rose Arnold: Count me as another enthusiastic WITNESS fan; it's the second-best movie of the year! I thought it was a fantastic film, as much so the tenth time I saw it as the first time. As for "non-Ford-fans'" objective and response to it, well, certainly most of the film reviewers aren't Ford fans, and it received uniformly good reviews. And most of my non-Ford-fan friends also loved it. It's just one hell of a good story, very convincingly told.

I can't agree with you about DUNE, though [has any movie so divided SF fans?? Most loved or hated it!]. Maybe because I was not a big fan of the book(s), I enjoyed the film. It was--dare I say it?--too short; felt like too much had been edited out to cram it into the "correct" theater length (since the major studios think no one can sit for more than 120 minutes at one time...hah! They should have seen the LA SW trilogy showing!!). I guess as a "visualist" I just liked the whole look of the film; I didn't really care if it made sense or followed Frank Herbert's ideas!

Debbie Gilbert: Re your comments to Maggie Nowakowska on George Lucas: Why should Lucas foot the bill for ROTJ on NPR??? I am at a loss to understand why people think that because Lucas is wealthy (and remember, he wasn't born with that money), we are all entitled to a free ride! I don't expect S. C. Johnson to provide me with free "Raid" or "Pledge" just because he's a millionaire, nor do I expect the Rockefellers to fly me all over the country or wine and dine me. If the public wants ROTJ on NPR, the public (that's us) should pay for it. Lucas has given them the rights to ROTJ; I think that's quite enough. Just who is being "mercenary" here--Lucas or the fans??

Michelle Malkin: Loved your comments about general sf fans and media fans; what are they afraid of, indeed? I think I buy and read just as many "non-media" sf books as most of these general sf

fans do; I'm fairly conversant with their authors and what's what in general fandom. We are not exactly illiterate idiots! Could it be that most of the really mud-slinging general sf fans suspect they might be missing out on something that's fun?? From my experiences at media and non media cons, I think we really do have more fun!

Cindy Rodriguez: Welcome to SE! I enjoyed your letter very much. I want to respond to Cher-ee's editorial note in your letter, asking about the zine "audience". My experience with publishing THE WOOKIEE COMMODE now for two years is that perhaps 20-25% of your buyers are people who submit anything to zines; maybe another 10% at least submit LoCs. But--we have noticed that several readers have been encouraged to try submitting something to the zine, after seeing the enthusiasm of our other new contributors. And this is a great trend, because zinedom needs new contributors to keep it fresh and growing. We encourage these neophytes all we can, because we want to keep fresh ideas coming in (and besides, most of them are terrific!).

Back to Cindy's letter: I don't think that male sf fans are necessarily more interested in plot over characterization; I just think they have a lower threshold of boredom for some of the no-plot, over-characterized stories some media fans (male and female) produce! Case in point: If I read one more "Han reflecting on his True Feelings while in carbonite" story or poem, I think I'll puke! I love a good plot, but only if the characters "feel" right, too; otherwise, I don't care what happens to them, no matter how clever or exciting the plot is. One the other hand, a bunch of excruciatingly correct characters sitting around agonizing over their True Feelings is also a crashing bore. Balance, please!

Sally Smith: Re female fandom [uh, females in fandom, NOT fans of females!], I think you have hit upon something with your comment that women may be more willing to work at something that has no promise of monetary reward. I'm not sure if this is a cultural thing, or an innate thing. Certainly it isn't work without reward--the emotional and intellectual reward is immense. But we ain't getting paid for it--in fact, if you publish a zine, you are probably losing money on it! (I speak from experience!) Maybe women can "afford", image wise, to make "fools" out of themselves over something like fandom, where many men feel they can't afford to. This comes back, then, to my original comments about how great a tolerance for public ridicule one has. I still think most women have more tolerance for it than most men--can "afford" to have more tolerance, perhaps, because society expects women to be a bit "frivolous". [And I say this from a position of some professional respect, where I have often watched women make the strong, hard decisions, while their mates quite often (literally) faint!]

Elsie Bartok: I would hate myself if I didn't tackle at least one sticky and controversial issue...so how about Luke leaving the strike force on Endor?? (The fact that I am privy to an excellent Karen Ripley story that sort of explains this whole mess has nothing to do with my opinions, of course! Heh heh heh!) My immediate impression is, "Hey--who cares?" Was Luke's presence crucial to the mission? Obviously not, since they did pretty well without him. He volunteered to go, so I don't know if his leaving could be categorized as desertion. I think it's also quite obvious why he told Leia (hell, he tells her why he had to tell her!), and why he didn't tell Han. If Han had known in ad-

vance, he would have tried to "rescue" Luke, and then the strike force's mission would have been compromised. I think the fact that Leia wouldn't tell Han where Luke went, or why, kind of says it all. She realizes that Luke has to leave (even if she doesn't like it!), and I think she also realizes that Han's feelings for Luke would require him to take some action if he knew "the kid" had marched off to face Vader again. When you think about it, Leia is really the one in the "moral maelstrom" on this one: she is trying to balance her concern for the two men she loves against her concern for the imperativeness of their mission on Endor. Real ulcer material!

One more--then I promise I'll quit!

Jean Stevenson: I, too, have often thought of SW in the Arthurian vein! In fact, that was my first reaction after seeing ANH the first time back in '77. (Of course, at the time I was also deeply immersed in a love affair with the whole Arthurian legend, so it only seems natural!) At first, I saw Han as Lancelot to Luke's Arthur, with Luke destined to "get" the Princess, but Han doomed always to love her, no matter how unsuitably. Now, of course, with Luke and Leia's relationship, it seems poor Luke is doomed to play Lancelot--a longing without relief! No matter how you look at it, someone gets bumped out!

As for your comments about the \$3000 for Harrison Ford's star on Hollywood Boulevard being better spent on something like relieving world hunger...the same thought occurs to me whenever I see our military buy another \$600 hammer or \$6000 toilet! Seriously, I think we all realize the solution is just not that simple. My suggestion is this: whenever you find yourself desiring to spend a few bucks for something others might question as frivolous [which for me is half the things I do!], write a little check for a like amount and send it to African Relief--or Save the Whales, or whatever suits you. Have your fun and save the world, too. I have made a hell of a lot of charitable donations this way, and I feel not a whit of guilt for the money I have also "squandered" on the silly things I wanted to buy or do. (P.S. Just for the record, I have not helped buy Harrison's star; I figure if he wants one, he'll pick up the phone and give me a call and solicit the bucks himself. If he does that, you can be sure I will cheerfully contribute!)

Enough! Remember, as always, I welcome opposing viewpoints--no matter how stupid, ignorant, and uninformed they may be!!

FIRST LETTER

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July 22, 1985

I loved your fan photos in #8, but I have an addition and a correction. The guy pictured with Jean, Jenni and Martynn is Eric Larson. Also, on the top of page three, isn't the lady to the far left Judi Grove rather than Marci Erwin?

I enjoyed Ann Wortham's account of seeing HAR-

RIGAN 'N HART. It's lucky they were able to see the play right away. Although it closed quickly, Hamill seems to have gotten good notices, so he should land something else very soon.

Zineds: If you want useful commentary on your work, keep sending your zines to Sandra Necchi. I admire her for reviewing under her own name; it shows she stands behind her opinions, but will remain objective.

Sally Syrjala and others: I agree there would have to be some limitation to how far one's powers in the Force could go. Not only am I uncomfortable with the thought of anybody having so much power, but I think it would be inconvenient getting psychic impressions everytime one picks up a salt shaker. Why wouldn't Jedi hold military positions? If Luke's commander status is honorary, does the same go for General Kenobi, as Leia addresses him in her holographic message?

Somebody (was it in another zine?--sorry) brought up the theory that you use the "Light Side" of the Force, but the Dark Side uses you. I like that, and it has less value judgement than some other theories. The Emperor hardly looks human any more. Wasn't he human once? Is his appearance due to great age, or is the Dark Side working these changes on his physical being? (Then again, I think he looks as if he's turning into a mushroom like you-know-who. Oh oh!)

Several writers regarding Luke's behavior as the Emperor zapped him: what purpose would it have served if Luke had died under the Emperor's attack? The last bit of good in Vader would have died with his son. Consider that Luke had the chance to run from Endor, but chose instead to look for the good left in his father. His last statement before the Emperor's attack was that he was a Jedi like his father before him. Saving his father was the most important thing in the universe to him, and at the end, he had to BEG his father not to blow his last chance at changing. Reaching for those possible fatherly feelings was the only choice he had left. What is ignoble about such a plea?

It looks like some of the old acrimony is seeping into some of the letters. I really disliked the sarcastic tone in one or two. Maybe we could take it easy on Cheree and each other and hang onto our more passionate missives for a few days, or have someone else read them before they are sent.

Mary Keever: I've seen those rip-off magazines too. They are pretty funny, but I think that even the sleaziest ones look more "official" to the general public than does any fanzine. The publishers seem to try to pass them off as the real story. It galls me that some fly by night publisher can make a few bucks ripping off copyrighted material, while fanzine eds and contributors, who are making no money at all and attempting to deceive no one, are sometimes put through such grief.

Let me add to Rose Arnold's comments on WITNESS, that I was also thrilled with the film's critical and financial success. I had especially high hopes for this one as Ford reportedly had a lot of control over the script and casting, as well as the choice of director. I always wanted to see how a Ford film would turn out if he had such control. WITNESS shows that his instincts and judgment, not to mention his good taste, are ahead of that shown by some people making film today. He deserves the clout he's acquired.

I wish we could lose that rumor about Ford appearing on LEAVE IT TO BEAVER. According to all his biographical material, Ford never acted profes-

sionally until he left college in the mid-sixties. In the late fifties, on the very early shows (before Tony Dow's voice began to change), Wally did have a friend named Chester who bore a passing resemblance to a young HF. Chester was played by Bud Hart. I've checked this out with the reruns on WTBS and a local station. (Tim Matheson, spelling his name Mathieson, was on the show, however. He played Beaver's friend later on.) Funny how a rumor gets started and one or two newspaper columns report it as fact. Then other newspapers repeat the inaccuracy and it finally ends up among other errors as an answer in "STARLOG Science Fiction Trivia." It still doesn't make it true.

Lin S. Ward: I think Yoda does refer to himself as a Jedi at least twice in the Saga, once in TESB ("Jedi Master? Yoda...you seek Yoda!") and once in ROTJ ("When I am gone, the last of the Jedi will you be."). There is at least one other being in the Saga with a life span close to Yoda's. Chewbacca is reportedly 200 years old, yet still appears to be in his prime.

I agree that Force ability would probably be present in all sentient species. Yes, I can picture a dia nogu with a lightsaber, but what about some of those beasts in the Mos Eisley cantina?

I think Luke's "Wormie" nickname helped all of us identify with him as he struggled through an awkward adolescence. Peer approval is overly important at that age. As a teenager, I fantasized about doing great things and being important when I grew up. Apparently, so did George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, Cyndi Lauper, Janis "At Seventeen" Ian, and others who did do "great things." On my first viewing of SW eight years ago, I saw it as a wonderful wish fulfillment story: the unappreciated boy turns out to be the only one who can save the day. It was only on the third or fourth viewing that I began to see other possibilities in the story.

One more digression on the actors: Want to feel old? Harrison Ford is slightly more than nine years older than Mark Hamill. ANH was filmed in 1976. Therefore, Hamill is now the same age as Ford was when he first played Han Solo.

Marlene Karkoska: You opened up a couple of issues that could become very hot. Regarding giving former Imperials a part in the New Republic, I would agree assuming you meant the people of the worlds that supported the Empire rather than the actual officers who called the shots. We could compare the situation to the way the German people were treated after each World War. After WWI, the Allies seemed to want to humiliate the nation as a whole. This left the people all too willing to believe lies about how certain groups had "prevented" Germany from winning the war and about how the Germans were better than any other people. (I realize there were other factors, including the Great Depression.) Contrast this with the way the Western Allies rehabilitated West Germany after WWII so that even 40 years later we are on friendly terms (also Japan). But the officers who ran the death camps and committed other atrocities (the officers they could catch) were removed from their positions and punished. I would not relish a SW version of the Nuremberg Trials, but why should people like Tarkin (and there are probably many more) have any part in the new government? This brings up other questions. Wouldn't it be safer for Luke and Leia to keep mum about their heritage? (This has been addressed beautifully several times in fanlit. The conclusion: yes, they should keep it a secret for a few decades.) What about efficient officers, like Piett

and Veers, who just seem to be doing their jobs? What are their real loyalties? Are they to be trusted? Worst of all, if the stormtroopers are (as I think) force-grown clones conditioned from "birth" to obey every order and have no second thought about killing or dying for the Empire, would a sufficiently skilled behavioral scientist be able to simply switch their allegiance so they would do the same for the New Republic? Should this be done? If not, what is to be done with the hundreds of thousands or millions of them? Can they be "rehabilitated?" If not, then what? Imprisonment? Death?

Regarding my remarks on the German people, I do not mean to excuse anyone of personal responsibility, but this sort of national amnesia is not exclusive to Germany. Look at the millions of people in the U. S. today flocking to see historical revision in the forms of RAMBO and MISSING IN ACTION. "They wouldn't let us win," said Rambo. "Do we get to win this time?" If it makes them feel better, most people will believe the Big Lie, from a Hitler or a Palpatine.

On droid rights, artificial intelligence, what-ever--oh boy, we'll never settle that one! Our civilization would probably be safer taking DUNE's way out and curtailing the complexity of its "thinking machines." Then the issue would not arise for real. On one hand, our brains are actually very sophisticated machines driven by chemical reactions rather than mechanical or electrical components. (Whether or not a "soul" expresses itself through this machine cannot be proved or disproved.) What if we were to build a computer that could learn independently and perform every function of the human brain? What if this "mind" were also kind, creative, idealistic, humorous, sympathetic (that really takes experience--look at BLADERUNNER), and all the other qualities we value in each other? Would such a being not be more desirable than some "real humans" to be neighbor, co-worker, citizen, supervisor? (As an android girl on OTHERWORLD asked, why was she different from the human boy, "...because I was made by man and you were made by God?") On the other hand, I probably wouldn't want my son or daughter to marry one. I'm sure we won't have to worry about any of this in our lifetimes. Actually even the SW droids do not seem to be quite sophisticated enough to "replace" humans yet, although they seem to act so independently that it seems some consideration of their rights must be made.

I don't blame Luke for not confiding in 3PO, considering the droid's reaction at Jabba's palace, although Michelle Malkin astutely points out that 3PO is a much better deceiver than he appears. The gift of the droids does bother me, though, as it makes it appear that Luke never seriously considered any alternative to fighting Jabba.

Michelle Malkin: If SW technology is advanced enough so that another pair of lungs could be cloned for Vader, why does Luke have a mechanical hand? ((Ed: Perhaps the technology does exist but is of such a specialized nature that it is only available at the most advanced medical facilities, something to which the rebels do not have access because of their outlaw status.)) We'll never be able to prove whether or not Anakin's body was inside the armor on the pyre. The "volcano" may not have left much more than we saw in his death scene. In this scene there was a shot of Luke with tears streaming down his face and Anakin lying in the foreground. There was enough time for us to see the body subliminate to another dimension if it were going to do so. Why

is this necessary for entry into "Jedi heaven"? Yoda emphasized that we are not "this crude matter". I can't see what Anakin's "crude matter" has to do with his "luminous being." ((Ed: Then, again, perhaps Anakin wasn't dead but just unconscious. Perhaps he died on the shuttle. Or perhaps, when Ben and Yoda reincorporated, it was a conscious act just before death. Note that Ben composes himself just before Vader strikes him with the saber.))

Isn't the Dark Side Universe idea fascinating? It could be the SW equivalent of "Mirror, Mirror." Sure, droids can be Dark Side, but what about Wookiees? Now that's scary!

Like Michelle, I think that the Jedi could have become weakened by the time of the Clone Wars. Any human institution that's been around for "over a thousand generations" is likely to become set in its ways, no matter how "true" or "right" its original vision. Michelle also made some very logical comments on Leia's possible future role in the New Republic.

Cindy Rodriguez asked if mainstream SF fanzines also are filled with stories like ours. Not the few with which I'm familiar. SF fans seem to think that if a story is not good enough to publish professionally, it's not good enough to publish at all. The zines I've seen often have very pointed reviews and colorful accounts of cons and other events. The letter columns are also a major feature. Some of the articles and letters tend to cater to an "in" group, spelling "God" and "beer" as "Ghod" and "bheer", stuff like that. Some zines also will devote pages to things like listings of an author's books, stories and articles, with ungodly (unghodly?) amounts of white space in between, useful to some fans, but not terribly creative. I've seen articles ranging from informative and enlightening to pompous and pedantic.

I happen to think that it is better for a beginning fiction writer to publish works in a fanish publication if s/he is not ready for the pros. Fellow fen give some feedback, at least more than you'd get from a form rejection slip. I'm preaching to the converted, right?

Are more women involved in media fandom because of an attraction to a character as played by a certain actor? I got into active fandom because of Harrison Ford's portrayal of Han Solo in ANH. For me, though, there has to be more. I've been strongly attracted to other characters, but did not want to read or write stories about them. For a fandom to last more than a year or two, there have to be strong enough characterizations backed up by a "universe" developed enough so that we would like to get inside and walk around. Having a "language" understood by hundreds or thousands of fans helps the neo get started.

Barbara Tension: What an elegant theory on why Palpatine was such a blabbermouth! The difference in the twins' ages being due to different dates of record had occurred to me, too.

Cheree: Thank you for the comments on fans' rivalry over the ST characters. I found the perspective reassuring. Neither my sister nor I watched the entire EWOK ADVENTURE, but she did tape it. I saw the last half hour and it confirmed my worst expectations. I don't know when we'll watch it. Maybe if I have children someday, I'll show it to them on their second or third birthdays.

That's enough for now--and I thought I wouldn't have anything to say! This was my first letter to SE and it's probably gone over the limit (I'll see when it's typed up). I'm sorry I commented on so

few of the letters. I have to plead long-windedness and a bit of intimidation in a few cases. Now I know why everyone writes such long letters.

GENETIC JEDI

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Alright, Cheree. I think that there is some thing that we need to discuss. Re the "photo" you decided to print in the last issue of SE, and the name that you put beside it--one "Nenni Whinney", whom I have NO connection with WHATSOEVER...

You're pushin', you're really pushin'...

I refuse to say anything more, as it would give credence to the rumor that I have recently had an operation to have my finger attached to my nose (in order to further my nose-thumbing at CERTAIN PERSONS, Cheree...) ((Ed's note: Actually the surgeon was trying to attach your finger inside your nose, but he missed.))

You promised you wouldn't TELL!!!

Now. Ahem. Now that that's over, on to less heart rending subjects.

Re blonde hair. Now. I think that an expert on the subject needs to shed a little light on this ca-ca about Luke's hair color. Can you say "blonde hair darkens with age"? I knew you could. Can you say, "in one's mid-twenties, light gold hair tends to go to dark gold, even light brown"? I knew you could. Now, go home and repeat this many times and, just maybe, it'll sink in.

(If anyone doubts the authenticity of my experience in the above area, send a SASE and I'll send various pics of my hair, from age 5 to now!) ((Ed: Ditto Ye Ed, whose hair has ranged from white blonde at age two all the way up to the present medium brown--and in answer to the question, does she or doesn't she yes, she does; about three times a year!))

Lin Ward: There are a LOT of things I could say about the Wormie nickname, and I don't think any of them are printable. And NONE of them are insulting! Also, mucho thanks for the VEERRRRRY nice things you said. I'm embarrassed. And I'm loving it!

Mickey: Please, don't jump up and down so much. I was talking about the "I know" line in regards to most of the audience, who snickered. You and I know how much pain he was in, but obviously most of the audience didn't get the connection. Out of 1776, I tend to like John Adams. My mate says it's because we're so much alike--"the Agitator". I like to think it's a compliment--chuckle!

Speaking on the psychology of fandom being mostly in their thirties--I recently read a book about the "baby boom" era called GREAT EXPECTATIONS. It mentions SW briefly as being something that the "bbs" saw as escape back to childhood. It is also a fascinating sociological study! Fandom does tend to have the 1947-1960 kids in it.

See this club, Mickey? It has your name on it, you'd better watch out! No, seriously, I didn't clarify myself enough in the article when I spoke of the Jedi as being a "genetic" race. I was speak

ing out of context, perhaps. I MEANT that it is a genetic trait, perhaps--but one that is passed on throughout the many races of the galaxy. Therefore, you can be an eight-armed alligator from Ilduc and have the Force, as long as you have that certain mix of genes that allows you to consciously USE it.

Cindy Rodriguez: I'm glad you caught onto the point about "...forever will it dominate your destiny...". Everything we do in life stays with us. We are basically the person that we were when we were six--in the sense that most of your personality and formation is done by then. Now, whether you choose to remain that six-year-old or not--that's the choice. But still, the choice is under influence. You could start down the Dark Path, but choose to leave it. Even so, the choice and the losing of yourself in that way, even for a little while, is still with you, a part of your experience.

One thing real quick--I'm enjoying all the pagan comments and mythos! Seems there's more people out there than I thought with my "primitive" bend of thought! And I'm glad everyone seems to be enjoying "the Private Life". Gives me the incentive to go on (and on, and on...I heard that!).

Re THE EWOK ADVENTURE--the acting did stink. I think someone should have maced Mace. But my daughter loves it, and that's what counts. One thing, though--if this is such a "kid's movie", why all the NASTY monsters? I've had a kid attached to my lap every scene with "monsters" in it. But she keeps coming back for more.

Tim Blaes: Leia is the strongest in the saga in certain ways, but in emotional involvement, up till JEDI, she's been the weakest. She has gotten better, but if we adhere to the theory that the Dark Side is the emotional, then she would be very susceptible to it for it's her weakest defense. And I do have the SW Brit comics, but I thought you just wanted to buy them, and I'm not sure I want to sell. Anything else, let me know and we can possibly work something out.

Onto another unpleasant subject. I think that Cheree is being very nice to those of you who insist on hassling her. I also think that you'd better stop being such jackasses and seeing bad in everything that's said. There is ridiculous and there is sublime. Take offense at everything, and give it, too--and believe me, there's some REALLY offensive stuff going on. Grow up.

(A quick note: Cheree made apologies for me last ish in that I was unable to make the deadline. I did not ask her to extend the deadline--as an editor, I know how impossible that can be at times! Neither did I ask her to make apologies for me--but I'm glad she did. Fandom does not, true, hold its breath to get an answer from any fan, but I considered it a COURTESY on Cheree's part to explain my absence. Look at the word -COURTESY--and consider it before you bellow so next time.)

And as to you, Ain't Worthit--uh, Annie Wortham...

Oh, phooey on you! And just see if I don't get my letter before you THIS time!!

Elsie Bartok: watch EMPIRE again; while Han's getting his taun-taun ready, others are getting ready to take other sections to look for Luke. And the shield doors were closed on BOTH Han and Luke. There are times when ANYONE'S dispensible, even a first-rate commander or a man who's been a lifeline of help to the Alliance.

End products...hmm. I'll have to ponder that for a while, Melody. A really good question.

I've often seen a lot of Arthurian legend in

SW, too, Jean. That's one subject I could talk over till the cows come home. (Ghads, speaking of naive farm-kid statements...yuck!) Love triangles are such a problem because of the mores--recent ones, at that, historically--we have grown to accept as "right and proper." Once again, ownership comes into the picture. Because that's what ORIGINALLY started the "only one love to this lifetime" theory. "You're MINE and no one else's!" S'funny how in every other aspect of our lives, we're expected to give love to as many as possible. Ah, well, I won't hop up on THAT soapbox, not today. Ask me again tomorrow--IF you're prepared to get your ear blathered off! ANYWAY, the Luke-Arthur Leia-Guinevere Han-Lancelot thing reached out and bit me when I saw SW. I think it's probably one of the reasons I fell so in love with the movie, for I'm an Arthur fan from way back. But I must say, I think that Leia comported herself with a bit more panache than Guinevere. I have seen very few examples of Guinevere that I liked, with the exception of Parke Godwin's (FIRELORD, BELOVED EXILE) and Leia I liked, save in EMPIRE, where I felt sorry for her. Even the Pagan vs. Christian issue is covered in SW, in a way. You have the "old religion" in the Force, and the newer, simpler faith in Han's attitude towards it. The new worlds ending out the old, and the later rebirth of that same old is the difference in SW. The old definitely lost with Arthur's death, even as it would be lost if Luke died. Both the "Kings of Light" are benefactors of the old, even as Lance/Han and Gwen/Leia are pushing for the new, yet willing to use the old, modernized. Hmm.

Now that I've opened up another can of worms...

Again, the hair. It's an interesting thought, but see first paragraph for thoughts on this as regards to Luke. Also, I'm one of the ones tired of all the heroes being blond and the bad guys being dark--for probably the exact opposite reason as yours, Jean. How many times did I try out for interesting "bad" parts in theater, only to be told that I was too "blonde". A lot of MY villains are blonds, just to get back at that! Blondes have more fun? Hah! I either played mad girls or uptight village virgins.

And getting back into what I discussed earlier about children and personality formation, I think it is remarkable that Luke has the capacity to love or give into the Force at all. (One quick thing, Jean--as to "using" the Force, I mean coexistence, going with it, controlling oneself in regards to the power. If the Force "uses" you, you use yourself, and eventually others. Sorry if I didn't make that clear--hope this sheds light on the subject.) I've always been a little peeved at Yoda in this--here's this kid who's been told all his life to only believe in what he can see or touch, and the little fungus expects him to just throw away all those ingrained attitudes in such a short period and believe just because he tells him to. Yoda did teach Luke not to give up out of frustration. He probably was just short of pissed at Obi-Wan for dumping this unlearned bumpkin on his doorstep when he had already retired long since. But, considering all the using that has been done in regards to Luke, I say it says a lot for the man that he can swallow it all and still agree to love. He's surpassed himself with the ability to unlearn. And if he has had false starts, that's the learning process. I agree, Jean, with your vision of Luke in this. He has not learned the lessons when most impressionable and is learning them late, but he IS learning them. Which is more than most people ever do. And that

gets directly into the last sentence of your letter. How many people are telling the truth? From what we've seen, it seems that Obi-Wan and Yoda are not as "light" as people would think. But then, age and learning does not mean wisdom. It comes from the heart, and Luke, Han and Leia have learned how to capture that, in full.

JEDI/FORCE SONGS

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July 30, 1985

Hi, everyone. Before I get off on a tangent, I'd like to make a request of SE readers. I'd like to compile a tape of "Jedi/Force" songs for those moments when I begin to suspect the Darkside's taken up residence in the attic and I need some inspirational jazz to scare it off. I have a couple already on hand, but would appreciate any suggestions anyone can toss my way. Not that I want this collection to be too heavy; I am going to start it off with "Weird Al" Yankovic's rendition of the old filk, "Yoda" (tune: "Lola") and will probably end it with a perfectly horrible C&W song that came out post-ANH, entitled "May the Force Be With You, Sweetheart". So far, and to prime the hunt, I have Dan Fogelberg's "Nexus":

"At the point of total darkness
and the light's divine divide,
a soul can let its shadow stretch
and land on either side.

Wealthy the spirit that knows its own flight
Stealthy the hunter who slays his own fright*
Blessed the traveller who journeys
the length of the light."

[**Stealthy the hunter who slays his own pride", to the official version, citing Obi-Wan as a good example of someone who is not afraid, but who is still mighty prideful.] And I have his "The Higher You Climb." The Nylons' "Prince of Darkness" also seems apt:

"when every heart has finally found the courage
to love with all its might,
the chains will be broken,
the doors will burst open
and we shall know the power of the light.
Prince of Darkness, you have no power here..."

Any and all suggestions (in SE or by mail) will be appreciated; maybe the reasons for choosing the songs will add to our discussion of the Jedi. For example, in the line above with the asterisk, Susan and I prefer the way we hear the song sung.

Speaking of Jedi, I'd like to agree with various people that many ideals need not be pervasive in the Order; individual enclaves could vary in what is considered "important". For example, I present

the Greenpeace movement. I, personally don't agree 100% with their nuclear arms stance, but I would have no trouble thinking of them as a good Terran enclave despite those disagreements. Their individual members, I am sure, vary in levels of "goodness" as all humans do, but their work, I think, qualifies for good Jedi work.

Now to the last issue: I was absolutely fascinated by the difference between Michelle Malkin's impression of early letterzinedom vis a vis Han/Luke fans! What a marvelous example of how two intelligent adults can see the same material in ways often 180 degrees out from one another. SE readers, especially those new to letterzines, will, I suppose, have to look at Mickey's and my letters over the past issues to decide whose reaction they agree with. I've thought about some of the factors that can affect a person's judgments, and offer the following as background for my own assessments (I'm sure Mickey has equally valid criteria, and I think I'd better add that none of the following are meant to imply that Mickey's ideas are their opposites):

First, of course, has to be my stand on the characters. I like Han, I always have, even when his screen image was still a bit questionable. I've paid my dues as a "Hanatic" with what sometimes seems like 60 jillion words of fanfic since 1977. But, he was never my only reason for liking the films; Luke, Leia, Chewie, Obi-Wan, etc., also claim my allegiance. I remember spending a lot of time fantacizing how I could be a Jedi AND have the life of a Corellian freighter captain. Further, I enjoy more private fantasies about any number of the other male persons in the story line. I like Han...but I've always craved his pilot's seat, not his bed. So, perhaps I was not as defensive of him when people waxed sarcastic about his less-than-perfect image, his questionable heroic, pre-TESB stance. Han struck me as well as others as a bit of a con man who played at being a mercenary, who tended to shoot the bad guys a tad bit more quickly than was usually accepted in then-current American mythos (pre-Dirty Harry). I simply liked him even that way (as I liked him mid-change in TESB, and as a happily, somewhat reformed guy in JEDI. And since I identified with Han, I reacted to some of the ruder name-calling as I imagined he would: TS, buddy, and So What?

Next, I suspect that old nemesis, vocabulary, came into play. If someone did call Han a con man, I wouldn't have gotten upset. I've worked with that sort before, becoming quite fond of some, and have always just made sure I kept my ears open, my brain working and my wallet closed. Outlaws are people, too, and some are valuable people to know. But another fan might have read the same words, con man, outlaw, nerf herder, and translated them as hate words, as accusations of despicable immorality. A corollary of this problem is the misunderstanding that arises when Fan A describes actions of Han that not only do not fit Fan B's image of Solo, but which, according to Fan B's code of conduct, totally thrust Solo out of the realm of possibility for hero/love/like status. Fan B then rises to Han's defense in no uncertain terms and Fan A feels put upon.

At work, also, is the way a letterzine winds a path through fannish socializing. A fan who only reads other fans' opinions may read a discussion differently from a fan who reads a letter with a background of party talk, local fannish gossip, regular fannish exchange available to her. I live in Seattle; I didn't make it back to any midwest/