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Woodstock Nation 20th.....	2
Power Breathing.....	3
New Age Cheers and Jeers.....	5
Film Reviews: The Qabalah of <i>Star Wars</i> .....	7
<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> .....	12
What <i>Batman</i> Is Everyone Watching?.....	14
The Adventures of Hal O. Harvest.....	18

# WOODSTOCK NATION 20th

..."And we've got to get ourselves back to the garden." Twenty years after, many have grown completely indifferent to the Joni Mitchell "anthem to Woodstock", though they have first-hand memories of its initial haunting occupancy of the airwaves; and that simply means that all too many have gone "onto the next" without a spark of reflection, fixed to the immediate focus of the consumer conveyor-belt as the social trends and transfers of administration style supply the succession of distractive images of which Woodstock becomes simply another (interchangeable and of equivalent transience) fading down the line. On the other hand, there are those for whom the refrain is an obsession: there are those who, fixed in time by an indelible impress of identification, scarcely notice the evidence of advanced conditions necessarily accumulated as the result of the passage of two decades. There are those for whom time seems to have stopped - and stopped right at the moment in which '60s consciousness appears to have turned collectively around in order to notice that it had just passed outside the Edenic wall. There is the distinct sense for many that the impact of that extraordinary interlude known as the Psychedelic Era (disclosing as it did a whole new Dimension of potentiality even in the midst of social madness nursed on the economy of a curious, artificial war) only registered at the sudden sound of those monumental gates clanking closed behind.

For those, the exhortation to "get back to the garden" takes on a very specific meaning.

These are the people who, as *The Times* recently reported, identified the whole Garden of glimpsed Consciousness (bearing its wondrous potential of psychic variety and ontological Unity) with that "special" moment media-frozen forever as the mythic Woodstock. Woodstock the album, Woodstock the movie, Woodstock the video - these are the exploitable icons, the captured echoes upon which consciousness "outside the Garden gates" can brood.... These are those who, in contrast to the amnesic armies of ongoing consumerism that marched blankly out of the '60s without once looking back, are said to have taken up permanent residency as in a religious vigil of hermitage service in and around the Woodstock environs of upstate New York. These are those who, like the redoubtable Wavy Gravy immortalized in gapped-toothed glee through *Woodstock* footage, have stuck around the hallowed grounds itself as if the real clue to what all that *was*, could best be found - if it could be found at all - where the ghosts still walked, the timbre of the general spirit could still be sensed in the enveloping silence. These are those who, still alive, still Remembering, are convinced beyond disillusion that something Extraordinary took place, something without parallel and of such significance to the human soul that "by rights" all things *should* freeze, everything should simply be hung in suspended animation until it can be determined just what that *was* so that it can be invited back, *mf*ull consciousness this time, to stay. These are those who, having grasped the extraordinary character of that quick chapter in human consciousness, have hung on the best way they know how, albeit feeling quite helplessly overall that such an unidentifiable Wonder came to a great climax and drained inexplicably away all at the same Place, and in that same span of three phenomenal days and nights in Max Yasgur's fields.

It is for that reason that the legendary locale itself has taken on such obsessive dimensions.

Yet those who've taken up residency there, in religious adoration and Watch, belong after all to the same essential culture and inbred consumer society as those far greater multitudes that just forget (and, indeed, exult in that forgetfulness through a lust of "belongingness" now rabidly rummaging around the bargain-basement inventory of cut-rate, 20th century trends characteristic of the "retrospective" '80s - the decade of costume-ball yesterdays without a face of its own at all.) Because of this very fact, even the era of "Woodstock Nation" comes around as a particularly bejeweled and glittering ball-masque seductive to a certain segment as fashionably opportune; those too young to remember directly can presume to cook up the concentrated spirit of "the '60s" in a high-priced bottle festooned with gilded paisleys and peace-signs. At the same time, their elder counterparts who can still spin tales of the "real thing" and who, as a negotiable bottom line, were "there", assume the same behavioral horizontality as the mass culture of consumerism they presume to abjure in their insular retirement. For, as recently reported, their interpretation of the mandate to "return to the garden" takes the form of *waiting*; they wait, they passively abide. With them, it is a matter of faith: consumer faith. Surely the original pair of promoters who put together the primordial unprecedented "package" (and who took a hippie-style bath, first time around) will resurrect, Phoenix-like, at the timely hour of its twenty year anniversary-return and manage certain magical negotiations with rights-owning Warners on the order of a full-scale conjuration, bringing that Spirit back Whole and phenomenally reconstituted so that - *this* time - we can value it sufficiently through our retrospective wisdom to know enough *not to let go*, to hang on at all costs and *ground it* as a permanent Celebration of Peace and Love that can only multiply and be fruitful all over the globe. This then is the Woodstock-generation, American-consumer version of the Second Coming.

But, as we read in *The Times*, Jock Roberts and Joel Rosenman do not have access to such impossibly-potent magic. There will be no full-scale Conjuration, no sorcerer's pact with rights-owning Warners so as to summon forth the departed hippie Spirit and bid it Stay (making "Woodstock Nation" swell on the surge of its psychedelic Sound-current to the bliss proportions of Woodstock Planet, the Max Yasgur "global village".)

And that is all to the good. One can't lament over the defeat which reality deals to such a consumer day-dream no matter how benignly oriented. The Spirit of Woodstock which *indeed* we celebrate - and rightfully so - on its twentieth anniversary, can only be truly seived where *the missing dimension* is added - which, by its earlier *absence*, actually accounts for the glimpsed Spirit of a Higher Consciousness having slipped away like so many lovebeads fallen from a broken string. And that missing dimension is precisely the magnitude of active intent, the application of an awakened will which does not wait upon the "next event", no, nor upon the next New Age fad or phenomenon that only gives the *impression* of participating while secretly supplying the convenient, consumer slogan, the "channeled" consolation of some extradimensional peptalk or patois that goes nowhere, and does nothing.

Swami Satchidananda gave the "benediction" at Woodstock lo! those twenty years ago, in which he congratulated the many-thousand multitudes upon the unprecedented and example-setting peace with which they were assembled - conveniently overlooking the fact that such "peace" was largely purchased by the widespread ritual of herbal inhaling and tab-consumption of which the Swami did not at all approve. This only shows, then, that the exemplary "peace" of Woodstock Nation was an *artifice*; it was produced as a *symbol* of what must ultimately be, not as the "thing itself! just as, the month before, Neil Armstrong walked the moon and from outer space NASA beamed back first-time visions of an Earth uniquely whole, viewed all-at-once as the common accommodation of everyone equally - thereby sending humanity a powerful imagistic *symbol* of what it must ultimately accomplish, by the Will of an awakened Heart, in Consciousness. Q



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# POWER BREATHING

by Morra Talion

## HAVE YOU DONE YOUR POWER BREATHING?

Last month, in Issue No. 1, we wasted no time in introducing you to a preliminary version of the Charger Breath. For those who read our July column, your diligent daily practice of that initial technique as recommended has served already to prepare for the potent rejuvenation of your systems, the enlivening and balanced intensification of your whole mind-body being. For those who're coming to this column for the first time, we recommend you practice a few days on the preliminary Charger Breath before progressing to the current lesson. A summary of that Breath is as follows: (until you become acclimated to the very tangible, strong, awakening power of this breath, we recommend that you practice it seated, in a comfortable chair which keeps the spine straight and vertical; face straight ahead, feet flat on floor, hands relaxed on knees or in lap).

Breathe *w* strongly, evenly and thoroughly through the nose, powerfully drawing the air in as deeply as possible; exhale through the nose with equal strength and thoroughness. This is characterized as *a fierce* breath. It should produce a loud rushing sound, like the steam blasts given off by old-time engines. Do this fierce, pumping Charger Breath several times in a row; pause. Relax. Feel. Repeat. Do a few such repetitions of this basic cluster of Charger Breaths. Increase the number of breaths in a cluster, and then the number of *repetitions* of the (expanded) cluster (i.e. do five Charger Breaths,

repeat this group *five* whole times with pause and relaxation between each group performance).

## LESSON TWO: WHOLE CHARGER BREATH

**1. Do all new breathing exercises *sitting down* at least the first several sessions of practice, regardless whether you've already practiced the previous variations. This is because each modification of the basic breath, or each introduction of a supplemental technique, produces a different effect on the system (whether a strongly different or subtly different effect); even if you're thoroughly acclimated to the effects of previous exercises, this does not therefore "inoculate" you against the modified effects which each new lesson introduces. Always sit with spine straight, clothes loose (or none), feet flat on floor, hands relaxed on knees or in lap. Fix your gaze on a point straight ahead to aid in concentration while performing the Breath.**

NOTICE: This issue only is a combined two-month edition allowing us to catch up with a first of every month release-date for the convert it: nee of advertisers having schedules of calendar events.

MISCEU ANY: In the Review Section of our first issue, readers may conceivably have wondered what "habituop paperweights" might possioly be, and what their connection was to the five-star rating system under discussion in that second paragraph. It seems our HAL computer with us own aesthetic standards lacking any sense of Gong Fu, decided arbitrarily to splice two tandem lines together at the point where similarly shaped letters in each line overlapped, eliminating that superfluous mess of letters in between so that "habituos of Leonard Mallin's Movie Guide and oilier desktop paperweights" became the above, elegantly compressed expression. Despite its pathetic assurances that its work would be back to normal and that it felt much better now, really, even though it knew it had made some poor decisions lately, we at T-bird Chronicle remorselessly pulled the system's frontal-lobe circuit complex so that now all it cares to do day in and day out is render a sing-song "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do..." and the only "Hal" we'll have anything to do with from now on is our own malleable cartoon maven the *New Age Ombudsman*.

2. Perform a succession of three powerful Charger Breaths, as you should be by now accustomed. Inhale strongly and sharply, thoroughly through the nose, then exhale with similar vigor, evenness and maximum expulsion of air also through the nose - *except*, this time, on the last repetition of the Charger Breath, the exhalation is to be performed through the *mouth*. To do this correctly, the lips should be compressed leaving only a very slight gap, virtually imperceptible to vision, through which the air of the exhalation is allowed to escape. This has the effect of greatly *slowing* the last exhalation. The use of such scarcely-pursed lips regulates the flow of air much more dramatically and "voluntaristically" than can be done by breathing out through the nose. There are two basic ways of allowing this last exhalation of the series to take place: the breath may be expelled by a kind of deliberate pressure, i.e. actually *blowing* out through the slight gap of the lips; or it may be allowed to "ease" away as if on its own, the air being leaked very slowly and evenly by the natural contraction of the abdomen and consequent deflation of the diaphragm without any deliberate "blowing" on the part of the practitioner. This last breath makes the final series-exhalation especially slow; and it is only when the escaping air has left the lungs in their normally-relaxed state that deliberate expulsion of the remaining CO<sub>2</sub> in the air sacs is called for, finishing off the final series-breath with a distinct, pressurized puff.

It is recommended that the practitioner favor the method of deliberately (though slowly) *blowing* the air through the lips on the last exhalation, at the *beginning* of each Whole Charger Breath session; but that, during the numerical increase of breath-clusters and series-repetitions in which the Breath is performed, the practitioner should gradually switch to the much slower method of allowing the air to simply "leak out" the tiny labial opening (like the scarcely perceptible leak of air from a minutely punctured balloon) on the automatic deflation of the diaphragm.

The reason for this progression has to do with the greater comfort experienced while "relaxing" the breath out of your system, the more saturated in surplus oxygen the system becomes; the further into your Charger Breath session, the more deeply you will have succeeded in altering the ratio of oxygen to CO<sub>2</sub> in the

blood in favor of oxygen; therefore the less likelihood there is of feeling that faint "panic" for air that might otherwise be felt if you tried "leaking" the last series-breath at the *beginning* of your session.

3. Perform several complete rounds of the three Whole-Charger-Breaths *always* breathing through the nose, in and out, except on the last series-breath where you breathe very slowly, evenly and thoroughly out the mouth, through scarcely pursed lips. Pause, relax completely (always keeping spine and head straight) *and feel* at the end of each round, before proceeding to the next cluster of three Whole-Charger-Breaths. Next, increase the number of breaths in a cluster (i.e., from 3 to 5, later from 5 to 7, etc.); and then increase the number of rounds each amplified series of Breaths is performed (i.e., from 3 rounds to 5, later from 5 to 7, etc.).

Remember: always breathe out through the mouth *only* on the last exhalation of the given series (for example, the three-breath series: in-nose, out-nose; in nose, out nose; in nose, out mouth - end of round.) There is no "count", as in many breathing exercises, so don't worry about measuring the inhalations and exhalations against each other according to some standardized ratio (2 to 4, etc.).

After practicing in the seated position several times during each day, you will have succeeded in pushing back the threshold of possible hyperventilation to the degree that you can perform the Whole-Charger-Breath randomly, while walking, standing, etc. You should resort to this random charge-up often. You'll find it makes you feel better in general, more alert and vigorous in particular, with a balanced amplification of the overall sense of poise, ease, confidence and well-being. Best of all, this practice sets the first (though necessary) foundation-tiles *forsucceedingmomhs'instruction* in which you'll learn to apply the Breath and its modifications for important work in rousing dormant faculties and functions, sparking higher agencies of psychic, emotional, mental and spiritual potential while speeding the harmonious integration of whole-Being systems and circuits for improved health and a deeper, more essential happiness.

But you must keep up your practice daily. Maintain a *diary* or *calendar* to remind yourself, and to record your successes in meeting your schedule with the Power Breath. Also, leave helpful notes and messages around the house (taped to the refrigerator, wedged in the mirror-frame), in the car (visor, dashboard) and even at work (fixed to the file-cabinet, under the glass of the desktop). Such messages can simply remind you: BREATHE!

Follow the instruction as it's given, and you can't help but feel the resultant *Change*. In order to *know* what the great Change is that we're talking about, you *must follow and do the practice*. Don't forget: do your Charger Breathing daily. It's very important. Make the Power Breath more popular than jogging.

Do you have any questions about your practice of the Power Breathing techniques? Any observations you'd like to share? We'd welcome hearing from you, so simply address your remarks or questions *to Lettersto the Editor: The New Thunderbird Chronicle, 15237 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 29, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272*. We'll try to respond to any significant questions you may have, either in the monthly Power Breathing column itself or in Letters to the Editor.fi



# New Age Cheers and Jeers



## NEW AGE CHEERS AND JEERS

by Morris Tarantella

Announcing a NEW FEATURE in T-Bird number 2, to wit: NEW AGE CHEERS AND JEERS!...huh? Can there even *be* such a thing as *New Age* cheers and jeers? Isn't that an oxymoron, or something? After all, the New Age with its promotional gentleness, its effusion of professional kindness (oh oh, beginning to sound like somebody?) just doesn't seem as if it would bond well with the assembly-hall aggression and good ol' mainstream-American yahooism that the T.V. Guide phrase "Cheers and Jeers" conjures up. "Cheers and Jeers" just seems to...well...step *over die line*, you know, just sort of *breaks the mood* of mirror-rehearsed inoffensiveness with which the New Age has consensually encircled itself. More to the point, it seems to brashly violate the atmospheric contrivance that sticks to all matters New Age like Elmer's Fog, the implicit hands-off pact which propagandizes the visage of conviviality and brotherly concord by its careful avoidance of overt abrasion, but which as everyone knows is really just a business premise - the New Age twist to competitive free enterprise, that takes canny stock of its tenuous mainstream position and so faces outward as a homogeneous, peaceful "alternative" ever so mildly but firmly closing ranks. By this more matter-of-fact measure it's just not de rigueur to "open fire" (the very *expression* is disturbing, no?) from the position of the New Age marketplace, behind the beetjuice and electroplate barricade, as it's most likely to start drawing fire *back*. Besides, those shots are liable to stray into the stalls (oh oh,

it looks like Zeb has somehow slipped inside the Zone; we've been fearing this all along, you know).

We could, then, envelop this entertaining little column with a High Philosophy; we could propose that its *raison d'etre* is to deliberately pique and positively provoke the New Age tolerance-threshold for which it's so justly famous. We could suggest that the purpose of this ongoing feature is to ruffle the carefully-preened feathers of non-controversy which the N.A. seems so neurotically to protect.

Now *why* would the guardian-protector T-Bird want to do that to such a nice nascent tribe of possible world-changers? Well, let's take a look at the consequences of devoutly desiring to remain so "inoffensive" - let's really take a look at what happens when the transitional forging of a new world-philosophy (excuse *me, paradigm*) gets its Ps and Qs mixed up with the Perks and quotidian Quotations of the business mind. Let's see what the consequences might possibly be of abjuring the ideas of leadership, positive power and purposive direction as too corruptibly "masculine", "linear", innately "authoritarian", etc. (as if "feminine" somehow implied no-leadership, no-power, no-purposive direction). While the *Greens*, for instance (of which Fritjof Capra is a current, prominent member, see last month's book review of *The Turning Point*) whose hearts are most certainly in the right place, wiggle their collective fingers in the air for fear that actual *applause* at some speaker's point might make them guilty-by-association with the "aggressive patriarchal psychology" that's chopped down their favorite fern, the Mills of Hell are blithefully busy gnawing noisily away the very ground on which we all most-dependently stand. And of course, they do so quite confidently, after all, from what should they fear? From an "international movement" the

homegrown version of which is too trepidatious to *peep!* too insecure in the irresolvable *conceptual* formulations of some possible "New Age"-position to ever forge collective cords of a needed, clarion Voice that can Just Say No *where it counts*, on the floors of Congress, across prime-time national airwaves, in crucial Commission hearings, in the conglomerate-owned isles of marts and chains and in the privacy of the voting booth? No, the Mills of Hell have nothing to fear from a consciousness which has learned well enough how to *dissolve* the old knots of patriarchal thought-patterns but which has found itself simply adrift in that half-

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formed chaos of post-modern, psychic dissolution without the trust or confidence to stream back together again as a collective Energy of Awareness unafraid to apply a judicious Negative, an unequivocal No from the unitive vantage of that Awakened, integral focus. The Mills of Hell have nothing to fear from a consciousness stuck in the soggy stage of tentative dissolution, still hesitantly yielding most-dear identification with its gender roles and "filling-in" in the meanwhile with a shapeless self-congratulatory tolerance cash-redeemable at any Expo, that only succeeds in drafting into its platform every hesitancy of the lowest diffident denominator while inadvertently including in its generous sweep a tacit "tolerance" for the Exterminators out running wild on the lawn.

We could, then, gussy-up this bit of entertainment making of its monthly, raspberries-and-cream presence a full-fledged T-Bird Premise: if the "New Age" is ever to amount to more than the McLaineism that it's a viable way to make money on its own merits, it's going to have to possess the Whole-hearted awareness to openly Cheer, without reservation or embarrassment, for what its Unity-of-Consciousness perceives as valuable and right; and it's going to have to find the courage of that Consciousness to quite happily Jeer at that which it consequently *knows* in its heart to be mad, and mortally wrong. One can't Act, until one Sees; and one can't testify that one plainly Sees, until the Eye of Consciousness is truly Open.

The very *idea* that comes shuddering up out of this column, then, most likely grates on the egg-plant nerve of New Age Consciousness, since there's already doubt as to the propriety of "grating" in the N.A. context *at all*. Okay. Cast a wary eye this way - you're probably right to assume there's trouble brewin' in the Forbidden Zone, beyond the Boundary of the Bubble - but there's trouble anyway, and more trouble than could possibly ever stuff itself into these slender little columns of amusement on a mild afternoon. So rev up your engines of objection - maybe after the spleen vents itself on these inoffensive verticals, it

can be concentrated to an intelligent fire and aimed in a really Effective direction.

### Cheers

The "Even So - A Mazursky Movie Is Hardly On The Same Order Of Abysm As The Big-Hands-Of-Allstate" award. To *Talking Head* David Byrne, for reportedly turning down the million-dollar offer of an insurance co. to use the hit single *Once In A Lifetime* from the album *Remain In Light*; the lyrics "this is not my beautiful house" were to segue into the commercial opener: "but it could be!" It's not likely this well-advised demurrer will leave David "down and out".

### Cheers

The "That's Nothing; We Once Got One To Look Like The Crab Nebula" award. To the boys at reactor Number 4, Chernobyl, 1986 and to advocates of "peaceful" atomic power everywhere; according to a US intelligence source quoted in *Fatima Prophecy* by Ray Stanford (cf. Book Reviews, next issue) infrared photos of the Ukraine reactor obtained from a spy satellite "look like an incredibly brilliant star gleaming upward from the earth"; this same Defense Department source overheard someone soon after remark that Chernobyl translates as "Wormwood", (a fact which didn't escape the attention of a number of people outside the intelligence community!) and especially since the fallout from Chernobyl is expected to ultimately contaminate about a third of the world's water supply, it's good to know that there are many groups, institutions and governments around the globe carefully employing the *Apocalyptic Revelation of St. John the Divine* as an operator's manual and guideline of scheduled events. (This is apparently the kind of world where Arthur Murray could diagram his dance-steps over the edge of a precipice, and everyone would dutifully follow them into the pit.)

### Cheers

The "I Think There's A Couple Things From *Omen 2* You Missed Getting Into Xrt *Of The Deal*,

Don" award. To Donald Trump for performing the invaluable service of clearly drawing the line, thereby sparing everyone the wrenching ambiguity between "going for the buck", and tending the last spark of human empathy that might yet be conserved in those beleaguered psychic depths. Don puts the proposition quite plainly, and thereby helps one and all immeasurably, if you find this self-proclaimed Greed Lord and poster-child for the World Bank attractive; if you find his deliberate advertisement for the unvarnished principle of self-serving appealing; if you find his reptilian charm irresistible, the chill aloofness of his public disdain (reputed to make him distinctly uncompanionable even to the Miltonian Satan ensconced in halls of eternal ice) more than you can possibly resist, then there's still room for you in the company, even at this late hour! Go for it! (And a complimentary gift-package of the exciting *Trump, The Game* to you, too). Yes, to Donald Trump goes the Schweitzer-Hammarskjold-Gandhi "I Told You So" award, for furnishing the purest possible role-model to the maxim that *you just can't have it both ways*.

### Jeers

The "The Brown Acitotryanoxydate Is Not, Specifically, Good, I Repeat, There's No Such Thing As *Bad* Acitotryanoxydate But The Brown..." award. To the manufacturers and food processors who silently irradiate our food, sans labels, warnings, against the negative evidence of test results and the testimony of responsible scientists in order to better serve the tangled laws and de facto "codes" of their country whereby the military is forced to claim its Plutonium byproducts secondhand, from the ingenious peacetime uses of "private" reactors. Thank you Hunt's, Rosarita, Wesson, La Choy, McCormick-Schilling, Fisher, Swiss Miss, Orville Redenbacher's, Peter Pan, Snackpack and Manwich for dumping irradiated spices into your products for good old Uncle Sam. Perhaps, in order to get a truer measure of the gratitude your public and paying customers must surely hold for you, (or *would*, if you'd but publicize your good works and selfless public service with the same vigor the utility-companies muster to inflate our rates by propagandizing their nuclear involvement) a survey should be taken in the Latin-American community which is the largest single consumer of Rosarita's Refried Bombs. Yes, let's get the T-Bird Chronicle and the Coalition to Stop Food Irradiation leaflets circulated in the Latin-American communities...what's that, you say? The T-Bird diction is just too difficult for those for whom English is largely a second language? Then just circle this little section in red when you distribute these copies as part of your public service; it's amazing how people can read virtually *anything* in no matter what language, when the gist of the information is that they're being sold out faster than your salsa disappears from the grocery shelves. For further information, write: Coalition to Stop Food Irradiation, P.O. Box 3294, South Pasadena, CA, 91030-3294; or call: 213-682-CSFL.



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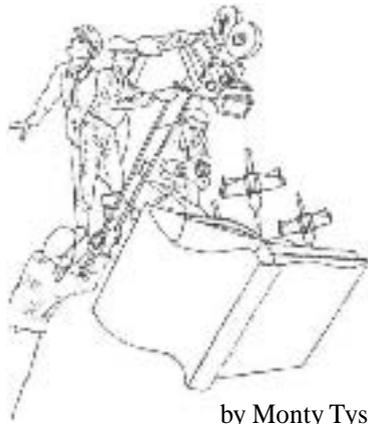
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 \*\*\*\*\*

Has Gong Fu; has a measure of both technical and intellectual/emotional power.  
 \*\*\*\*\*

May or may not have Gong Fu; has a measure of technical and intellectual/emotional power. (Since Gong Fu is the principle that sets a work on fire, intensifies it to the degree of boiling, then a 3 or 3Vi that has Gong Fu possesses it to the extent that the work, at least in part, exhibits first signs of real kindling; it strikes a genuine spark of combustion, at least in places. If a 3 has no real Gong Fu, it must still have a good degree of technical, intellectual/emotional power.)  
 \*\*\*

Has no Gong Fu; may have technical or intellectual/emotional magnitude.  
 \*

Has no Gong Fu; has little, though possibly some, technical or intellectual/emotional magnitude.  
 Z

May have any of the above, including (sometimes but not often) Gong Fu, but still deserves to have the Marx of Zeppo swiftly etched across the designer label of the smug-fitting back pocket.

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**MOVIE AND DREAM:  
 THE QABALAH OF  
 STAR WARS**

**PART ONE**

With all the Sequels of Summer upon us, it might well serve those who seriously avoid packed movie houses to take another leisurely look at some of the originals that are on video, and which are therefore virtually fingertip-accessible without moving from one's couch or the privacy of one's den.

But oh, we hear the readership grouse already, we've viewed *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* at least twelve times, we've watched the Ghostbusters do in that "ol" Zoolie minx" to the point where we mutter all the punchlines in our sleep...just how does one propose to squeeze extra mileage out of filmfare that can - and therefore often does - get played with the frequency that used to characterize 45s?

In order to understand how indeed this may be done, you must first understand a certain "peculiarity" of this journal's monthly film critic. Most critics we've ever encountered are of course concerned primarily with acting and plotline, production-values, technical and artistic merit, the success with which the filmmaker's apparent intentions were carried out, an interpretation of those intentions, etc. This is important at one level since there are standard narrative, artistic or entertainment premises assumed between ticketbuyer and merchandiser, a certain minimal and invariant consensus as to what has to be supplied in order for approval to be forthcoming.

Well now - this critic will go along with that, to a degree; but there are all manner of Siskel-Ebert specialists in that narrow field already, whose focus is so comfortably fixed with respect to those standard criteria (the bare-bones "who-what-when-where-why and how" of the filmic medium) that it seems a shame to simply duplicate such a marvelous effort of conventional valuation. There's already a smorgSsbord of intellectual range in that same general zone, so you can Medved if you don't feel like Siskeling, or you can sample along the general line of stock luccubration furnished by *Esquire* or the *LA. Weekly*, etc.

However, your current friendly critic does indeed present a peculiarity with which you ought to become familiar; it is in his orientation with respect to the "cinematic phenomenon" in general that you may - perhaps - discover the means of watching those well-worn videos with something like a fresh eye. You may even begin to educe a new form of pleasure from such viewing, in the context of an enlarged *psychic* dimension analogous to the novelty t.v. technocrats attempt to furnish with 3-D glasses popping out your 2-D Easter-Parade screen.

**Movie and the Caverns of Dream**

To get acquainted with the general orientation comprising the undercurrent of this column month to month, let's consider, first of all, just what the experience of movie entertainment *is*, whether theater variety or home video; the "movie-experience" is, basically, that of a luminous image in a darkened enclosure. Period. Already, we begin to perceive its kinship with *dream*; for dreaming is

in a very real sense the imagistic lighting of an interior darkness. Moreover, movies provide us with sounds and images that are highly stylized, not at all like the visual and audible presentations of ordinary waking experience. There's a syntax to the sensible construction of the movie's elements, an artistic diction that takes into full account the specific requirements of both its spatial and temporal modes of organization. Movies necessarily obey a grammar of composition, of rhythm and movement virtually imposed upon the medium by the restrictions of its recording apparatus in exactly the same way that the restrictions of paint or musical implement, for example, supply the context in which the minimal grammars of pictorial and sonic arts proclaim themselves.

The power of the movie medium to render its images in gradations of black and white (and thus, virtually, in patterns of *shadow*) as well as in colors that aren't naked ocular lights but creatively filtered tones shows us immediately the close kinship of the filmic art with *dream*, wherein the features of waking reality are similarly sifted and transformed through a psychic grammar that tints the various "natural" hues with properties peculiar to the medium.

Film and dream, similarly, refuse to conform to the rigid requirements of spacetime interaction coordinated through (and thus limited by) the neural and muscular operations of the physical body-pattern. In both film and dream we can jump like the electron in its quantum cloud, from longshot to closeup and all gradations of midrange by abrupt discontinuous transitions needing no physical rationalization; we can hopscotch backward and forward in time, leapfrog over all imaginable intervals of spatial or temporal distance and *accept* such staccato transpositions with the nonchalance accorded any, learned convention of a given vocabulary. We aren't disconcerted in dream when the viewpoint or perspective instantly switches without the laborious mechanics of transition belonging to the pattern of the waking, physical organism; and similarly we don't blanch at the "unreality" of cross-cutting viewpoints or perspectival montage served up by the magic of the available filmic repertoire.

The flat reduction of the image, the artificial line of the allowable focus with its enforced framing etc. furnishes us the stuff of our familiar perceptual reality at an order of significant *removal*, so that all artifices of the filmic vocabulary are immediately acceptable and indeed taken for granted without confusion; and it is the same with the psychically rendered images of dreams having a certain verisimilitude but existing already at a stylistic remove from the physical laws and requirements governing the images of waking life.

In this way we come to see that, like the medium of any potential "art" or agency of stylistic portrayal the Movie has its own relation to charm, its own claim upon extraordinary fascination. Movie enlists the acceptance of our imagination as does all art, but in a peculiar way typical of its character, in a way which correlates it quite intimately with dream. There is then an additional and very rich *dimension* to movie-viewing, whether through the projected-surface glow of the big screen theater or the backlit, phosphorescent luminance of the t.v. tube. Movies, in their structural and phenomenal correlation with the psychic medium of the dream-mind, take hold of us all at a level which simply surpasses the superficial scan of conventional mind (that concerns itself with the logic

of plot development, the motivation of character, etc.). Though the *explanation* as to the deep relationship between movie and dream may seem archly abstract and remotely intellectual, we are *influenced* by that relationship at a level that does not depend upon the understanding, the acceptance or rejection of formal explanation. We don't have to follow the *explanation* of the film-dream correlation to be tremendously affected by it.

And of course, because we are immediately affected by that correlation entirely independent of rational recognition we are influenced most strongly at the very level of the *symbolizing, subconscious dream-strata* itself/where the light of conscious reflection does not automatically penetrate. This should help us, for example, to account for the powerful behavioral influences exerted upon an audience passively absorbing not only the overt cinematic impressions but the subtle connotations and analogically extensive undertones, communicated in the quick pulse and montage bursts of sounds, of lights and images juxtaposed so as to subliminally suffuse the receptive "psyche of symbolic correlation" with oddly meaningful resonances, non-verbal but potent cues.

(Do we subscribe therefore to the "conspiracy theory" of human motivation, that we move en masse according to the promptings of the nefarious media-programmers of the psyche? Not necessarily. Deliberate "strobing" of messages is certainly *available* through such media; but the unique juxtapositions and perceptual syntheses ordered by the grammar of movie montage can be considered more commonly as products of an intentional "half-light" on the part of the movie maker, the creative film artist and schlock film-meister alike being *allured* and subliminally *charmed* by the oneiric powers and properties of the magical, glowing Moviola editor.)

If then the filmmaker himself (like every creative artist of whatever field) is not only relative "master" but wistful *victim* of the twilight properties emanating from his own working medium, may we not propose that he is *unusually* susceptible to the whispers of a praeternatural Intelligence *using* the subliminal avenues of the dream medium as effective, impressional means by which to issue its communications?

### The Dolby Oracle

After all, this is not so far-fetched when we remember that Seth (remember Seth?) explained through Jane Roberts that the genius of Higher Intelligence belonging to dimensions other than the familiar physical established communication - or "channeled" the patterns of its information -

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through the subliminal or dream mind of the channeler; the form of discarnate Intelligence of which we are receiving such a popular bombardment in the New Age circuit (and of so wide a range of merit, since the original excellence of the Seth Material!) always percolates up through the psychic strata of the deep mind, through the rich bed of symbolizing syntax in making its emergent connection to the rational mind of the "channeler". Higher Intelligence is by vocation awake in (and extends through) the psychic dream-strata as the very consciousness contained in those connective and correlative terms, so that in Speaking through the relatively dim "waking light" Of the physically-oriented channeler that Intelligence is able to stretch the range of spiritual cognition ordinarily available to the literal interpretation of daytime focus.

Why then shouldn't the filmmaker, at least selectively, be a particularly susceptible subject for the imparting of such super-sensible communication through the dream-strata? Like any artist he wouldn't have to be an overt "channeler" at all, and the influence could be purely subliminal, never rising to the surface of consciousness as the superposition of a "separate" intelligence. Thus the Influence which was imparted to such a creative fellow, and which was intercepted at the conscious level as purely "personal" inspiration, could easily find its way in subliminal form in the very context and content of the resultant Movie! The filmmaker himself might not (and probably wouldn't) have *any idea* such specific symbolism and intelligent communication was encoded into the elements of his film. He might very well enjoy the finished product as a "private creative effort", whereas in reality it was simply burgeoning, bursting at the brimming seams with a wealth of transpersonal Symbolism and Cosmically Significant allusion.

In this light, let's take a closer look this time at George Lucas' *Star Wars*.

### A Note on Notariqon

Ah, dear reader - don't despair so quickly! You're not to be subjected to yet another sterile intellectual treatise purporting to find vague Jungianisms in the most crassly popular entertainment (although if *Star Wars* has been likely-enough ground for such New Age stars as the late Joseph Campbell to confidently stake the flags of familiar archetype, one hardly sees what the readership could possibly begrudge its friendly film-critic!)

On the contrary, we're going to brush off our Codex containing the elements of the dream-grammar belonging to good old *Qabalistic* interpretation, and proceed to point out some very specific "implants", some almost flagrant evidences of a praeternatural Intelligence having passed nocturnally over the Lucas landscape leaving tell-tale signatures in the most familiar pop-cultural artifacts such as the names of heroes and villains, concrete plot elements, etc.

What's that you say? You can't follow your friendly film-critic because you're not familiar with Qabalah? And you don't intend to take it up now? (After all, do *Reed* and *Wheateley* expect you to know Sanskrit, or to be on familiar terms with the Rosetta Stone simply in order to sit through a review of *European Vacation*!) Take heart. The Qabalah has furnished a lot of fun ere now for those who didn't know a thing about esotericism, including those who've written "treatises" on the subject! You'll soon find the plot irresistibly intriguing, and besides we only incorporate for your

convenience the most rudimentary Qabalistic elements carefully explained; the whole thing will prove painless, and your teeth will come out at the other end of the process shiny as a polished menorah! (There, that wasn't so excruciating, was it! You just got your first Qabalistic lesson in that analogical pun, and you're probably sitting there still grimacing like the kid who doesn't know the nurse has already delivered the shot. The Hebrew letter for Spirit is Shin - cf. "shiny" - meaning "tooth"; and its character is shaped like a tri-pronged menorah).

Got the hang of it? Not quite....Well then let's swing straightway over the abyss of the dream-mind with Luke and Leia, and begin our scrutiny of the original *Star Wars* from a somewhat different vantage so that we can hone the blade of unfamiliar tools against the concrete profile of quite familiar characters.

## PART TWO

### The Qabalah of Star Wars

In fact, let's first look in on the hero of the *Star Wars* opus, young Luke himself. The name Luke, of course, may be considered the fantasy-fulfillment device of filmmaker Lucas self-admittedly enamored of the old *Flash Gordon* serials; it might well be within the range of his conscious intention to have projected himself eponymously knowing that "Luke" and even "Lucas" derive from "luce", light; then of course the name "Skywalker" could be construed as intentional as well, since the "light that walks the sky" is sunlight, thus very deliberately making the "star" of *Star Wars* a modern expression of the Solar Myth. That "Luke Skywalker" may be meant as a contemporary Sun-hero, however, does not in itself take us further than the Jungianism we solemnly foreswore at the outset, nor does it give us any example that might extend beyond the likely reach of the filmmaker's quite deliberate design. (Keep the analysis in mind, however, and compare with what is to come).

Another hero of the familiar saga is the magician and Jedi Knight Obi-Wan Kenobi. What a curious name, don't you think? Obi-Wan...curious until you consider that the "channeled" treatise of the twentieth century thaumaturgist (magician, in the ancient sense) Aleister Crowley, i.e. *Liber Al vel Legis* (*The Book of the Law*) speaks in Chapter I, Verse 37 of working the magick of the "obeah and the wanga". "Obeah" is a well-known form of African magic - indeed it's alternative spelling is precisely "Obi"; "wanga", (even apparently unknown to Crowley, at least at the time of his having written the commen-

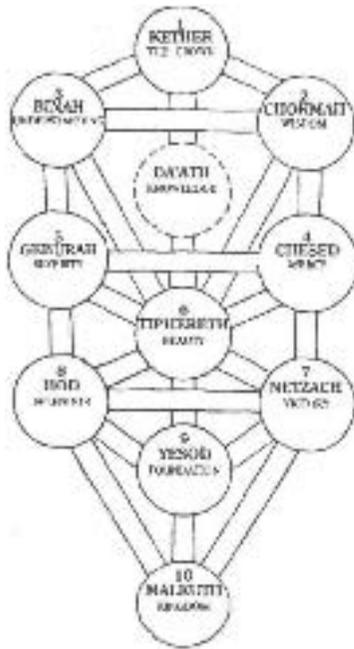
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taiy to that particular passage) is a Haitian Creole term of Bantu origin and refers to a type of voodoo sorcery. Consistent with such a theme, may we speculate that "Kenobi" refers obliquely to Kano, a Nigerian city? or is it perhaps an Egyptian reference pertaining to the "Canopic" jar in which the viscera of the dead were interred? In any case, all of this is still in theoretical range of the filmmaker's intentional activity - even if by now it is rapidly outdistancing the probable; but we are, at least, squarely in the Qabalistic ballpark for, despite the possible wails of the Hebrew Qabalists elicited in protest at this point the communicated text of *Liber Al vel Legis* is specifically Qabalistic and draws in large part on the esoteric terminologies and correspondences of the Magical Order of the Golden Dawn, of which Crowley was a former member. (As for "Jedi", could this be a reference to the spiritually honorific title of the Hindus, i.e. "Jaddu" as in the designation "Jaddu Krishnamurthi"?)

If there is then a fairly persuasive argument as to the existence of "veiled allusion" in the heroes' names whether conscious or subliminal, what are we to find in that of the villain? What of the really eagerly anticipated consideration, that of *Danh Vader*]? In order to understand this one it's necessary to take a very short detour into the actual graphics of the Qabalah, specifically its traditional glyph the Tree of Life depicted below.



The circles of the glyph are called Sephiroth, and represent the multidimensional phases both of man and the greater universe, illustrating a very specific correlation. At the level of the dotted Sephirah, an invisible horizontal axis called the Greater Abyss demarcates the point of transition between the "higher" or creative-Divine dimensions of Being, and the "lower" or created dimensions notoriously subject to imbalance and illusion. This abyssal juncture at which the dotted Sephirah is placed, corresponds in the superposed human form to the *back of the neck* (and by extension the throat). In all magical and esoteric traditions of both East and West, the back of the neck signifies a special location. In the summary explanation of the yogic systems it represents the crucial phase of transition at which spiritual energies are "converted" into material and vice versa.

The "fundalini" energy (ordinarily locked into the spinal base, in its position of "exiling" the greater magnitudes of spiritual force from direct illumination of the head and thus of the liberative "higher Mind") may be balanced and harmonized through the chakras or vertical system of plexuses and endocrine centers in such a way as to "uncoil" from its serpentine lockin. On the occasion of this spiritually portentous moment, it participates in an overall repolarization of the currents and energy-fields of the mind-body form; it aligns and integrates the multidimensional systems at progressively higher levels of intensity and potential wholeness. The back of the neck represents the crucial transition-point at which the awakened nature current of the kundalini pauses, as it were, and gathers itself for the fateful leap in which it "hurls the abyss" between the lower and higher centers correlated with the lower and higher "worlds".

It is at this juncture that an *opening to cosmic influences* takes place; such an opening or vulnerability is operative even in all those for whom the "awakening of the serpent power" is practically so remote as to be of virtually no consideration at all, and it is particularly stimulated by the ingestion of significant amounts of alcohol, narcotic or mind-manifesting drugs, etc.

The influx of "cosmic influence" is especially decisive and intense in the case of a full-scale kundalini incident; influences of both a positive and a negative, a balanced and imbalanced kind are available through the test of that juncture. At such a crucial stage the "unloaded magazine" of the multidimensional nature-current, with much of its repertoire activated, sits sizzling at the basal brain, its distinct presence there even "heard" internally as a hissing or crackling, and felt as an electrical flicker in the medullary region. At that position it is, at least temporarily, greatly stimulating and enhancing the instinctual systems coded into the R-complex (the reptilian hindbrain) correspond-

ing "above to below" with the abdominal centers, the coccygeal plexus, etc. This intense vitalization and arousal of the patterns pertaining to instinctual-claims, territorial-survival and reproductive modes as well as the "will-to-power" associated with the solar plexus, stimulates the personality undergoing this dramatic Process to acute sensitivity relative to the respective overtures of those "positive" and "negative" cosmic influences.

Successful alignment with the influence of the cosmic-positive draws the serpent-power, or *kundalini*, by strong attraction into the cerebral zones themselves and fully awakens the legendary *third eye*, making potent values of spiritual insight and creative intelligence directly available. This turns the "head" of the kundalini-serpent (or nature current) by positive polarization-alignment, into the higher lobes with deferential reference toward the abstract powers and divine properties of a genuine spiritual Gnosis, situated structurally in relation to the cerebral "cap" or cortical *sahasara*.

On the other hand, should the personality experiencing such transitional vitalization of the sacral zones and corresponding instinctual patterns of the basal brain succumb by tendency to the blandishments of incursive, cosmic forces of the "other side", the Dark Powers of the Greater Abyss will have diverted the aspirations of the soul soaring up on the spinal "back" of the kundalini-serpent, and will have effectively locked the energy at that no-man's juncture of the notochord or basal brain, the "back of the head"; in this case the higher, creative spiritual faculties and occult powers associated with the third eye and upper head centers will themselves be turned or negatively bent in deferential reference toward the magical kundalini-rod sizzling like a flashing light-saber at the locus of the R-complex, or "reptilian hindbrain". In this way, *spiritual and creative factors* (i.e. occult or esoteric cognitions and values) may be put in service to the lower ego-drives of territorial domination, conquest and personal power thus upping the ante on the "individual survivalist stakes", and giving occult comfort to the negative hypothesis, the glamorizing propaganda of ego-inflation belonging to the Dark Side.

### Attack From The Back

Do you begin to see the analogy with Darth Vader, the *former* Jedi Knight, who was "seduced by the dark side of the Force"? Vader was a former Jedi Knight *necessarily*; for it is occult or spiritual practice along the path of the Metaphysical Warrior that alone conditions the *opportunity* for that crisis juncture of consciousness to arise, with respect to the "raised" kundalini. He was *irw* a Jedi Knight or esoteric practitioner before he could even qualify for confrontation with the bifurcation of paths; for that branching juncture only really occurs at the "brink of the abyss", and one is brought there only on the "back" of the dragon-serpent, the hissing and crawling kundalini. That crossroads of energy-alignment and intensification at the back of the head represents such a unique position of dual influence, and presents in particular such an opportune moment for the "dark side" to enter and gain ground, owing to the fact that it draws one's operative energy-complexes parallel the *cosmic* magnitude of those nether, instinctual-vital forces of the abdominal centers. Under ordinary conditions (the common functional level of humanity-in-general) those vital



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forces are *indirectly* operated by the pattern of self-enclosed energy currents on a much more reduced or "masked" scale, from the locus of the basal brain or R-complex.

We can see then that Darth Vader represents a blown-up version (extended through "hidden dimensions" and equipped with psi powers or quickened faculties enlisted to the service of self-aggrandizing aims.) of the ordinary avaricious ego stuck with the conventional inventory of exploitative armaments, in the same way that Donald Trump represents a blown-up version of the Artful Dodger.

In esoteric terms, then, Vader's operative locus of influence or "position of exploitative power" would be the vulnerable entrance into the subconscious complex and instinctual systems opened at the *back of the head*. This uncanny juncture is quite explicitly illustrated in all its lurid potential through the familiar Tarot Trump *The Moon* (the new Tom Petty album, coincidentally enough, is titled *Full Moon Fever* and displays the A. E. Waite version of the card patterned on the Golden Dawn rendition; the accepted correspondences in the system of that early 20th Century magical Order ascribe the Hebrew letter Qoph, meaning "back of the head", to that Trump).

The Secret, which makes that crucial crossroads at the back of the head so uniquely ripe for the dual overtures of "positive" and "negative" influence, has to do with the fact that our ordinary concrete physical style of perception is locked in place by an ingenious network of polarized fields constructing an "anisometric" or relatively imbalanced system of cognitive coordinates operative across the frontal and *basal-oriented* axis associated with the subconscious plexi of the vagus bundles. These autonomic processes, seemingly "set", in fact function along the loom of an elastic *indeterminacy* deriving from the conscious axis of which they are dependent, organizational currents. The rhythms and functional patterns required to conserve the psychic typology of a particular, compound-focal framework of perception and cognition, condense from the variable determinations in the identity-training of that axis. The responsive, subconscious currents shift the variable term of their own coordinate agencies on a sliding scale around the Zero-value that uniformly comprises the Standard and common denominator of every, discreet dimension or functional field of the mind-body being. The basal orientation of the currents as they conserve and enforce the "downward" focus along the multidimensional axis into the contrastive extremes of dipolar physical emphasis, draws the force of conscious identification as it were "offside", away from harmonious congruence with its own void-axis in itself. Such lower-plexus concentration and basal, vital-instinctual entrainment of the cognitive processes has the effect of "unzipping" the unitive axis into a relatively "unintegrated" pattern of opposing terms. An integrative "reversal" of such orientation, of course, polarizing the current-processes into a pattern conducive to the self-congruence and harmony of the conscious axis, has the effect of "zipping up" the artificially segregated, imbalanced coordinates. The locus of the back of the head marks the critical transition-point in the integrative "zip-up" along the conscious axis; for not only does it mark the transition between the spinal and cerebral systems physically but between the compound patterning processes of the autonomic networks (functioning through the indeter-

minate variable of the Conscious value) and that *Zero-value itself*.

The creative systems and dimensional centers corresponding physically to the head, operate overtly on the spiritual-absolute basis of that Zero-value; the created patterns of the systems and dimensional centers corresponding to zones below the head necessarily operate on the *implicit* basis of that universal Zero-value and structural "common denominator", but they are subject to overt masking and polarized deflection into broken patterns of anisometric "charge" (through the compound, focal coordinate field) that exert the persuasive pressure of opaque physical reality. The "concreteness" of physical reality, though secretly organized through the universal factor of Void, serves to effectively mask the Common Denominator of Zero-value through which all other possible fields and forces equally operate, and so serves to practically *screen* physical perception from direct regard of those alternative potencies and additional powers.

At the juncture of the *back of the head* that Void-value or Zero-factor secretly resides; the basal brain locale is the invisible and unknown *threshold* (i.e. the place of transition between lower "created" and higher "creative" zones) mediating the potentially covert and essentially overt existence of that Zero-value. At the direct locus of that juncture, then, the secret common denominator of the Zero-value may be *exploited* by beings, forces or personalities having direct access to it, so as to create an influential *permeability* with respect to the "heavy", blocked-out or masked field of ordinary physical cognitions.

Through this threshold void-zone at the base of the brain, the netherworld and cosmic forces gain a kind of *back-door access* to the conscious and subconscious systems of the ordinary personality focally "fixed" and locked in hypnotic thrall to the tightly screened zone of the physical field (cf. the nonfiction book *Communion* by author and screenwriter Whitley Strieber; fortified with this *esoteric* description you will understand what is happening to him, although he is unable to manifest such understanding on his own behalf in any of the text).

### The Dark Lord of the Sith

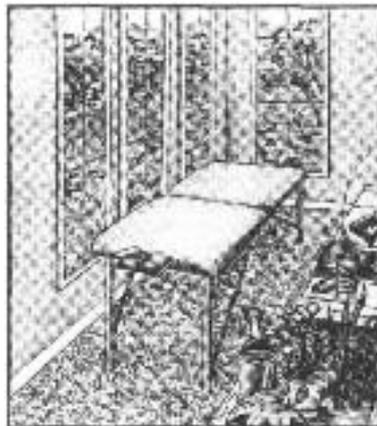
In the Qabalistic system, the dotted sphere or Sefirah which corresponds to this transitional

position at the "back of the head" is called *Daath*. It should become quite plain to the reader at this point that "someone" or "something" having to do with the creative process of the movie *Star Wars* wished to impart the subliminal communication, solvent to the conscious application of Qabalistic criteria, that there was a potential for *negative invasion* at the "Daath junction", i.e. at the locus behind and at the base of the head. For Darth Vader is now very transparently understood as *Daath Invader*. The invader from Daath. Vader is known in the epic as "the Dark Lord of the Sith". "Sith" easily decodes as *Scth* or *Set*, the negative principle in Egyptian mythology responsible for the death and dismemberment of Osiris (originally a lunar or fertility deity, and eventually a full-blown Solar god accounting for the seasonal and nocturnal "disappearance" of the sun's productive power); remember that Vader ostensibly "kills" Obi-Wan Kenobi, seeming to eclipse the beneficent Jedi only to have him become "more powerful than" Vader could "possibly imagine".

That Obi-Wan is squarely connected to the Solar mythology of the epic by Qabalistic correspondence, is clearly demonstrated in his nickname, "Ben". For Ben in Hebrew is "son", and, like the "son of man" is given as a descriptive term to the central Sefirah *Tiphereth* on the Tree of Life. All the Sefiroth correspond to "planets" (in the astrological sense); and to Tiphereth is ascribed the Sun. Importantly, Tiphereth in the *initiatic* system of the magical Tree represents a landmark of adeptship, the station of Adeptus Minor. It indicates the significant opening and empowerment of the Heart center (Tiphereth is ascribed to the heart in its physical symbolism), and the limbic system of the mid-brain with its pituitary body identified, by polar correspondence, *with* the heart.

Note that in Qabalah *Daath*, which means "knowledge", is often referred to as Death (in the sense that it represents the juncture of the fateful "fall" into the spiritual death of vital incarnation and the rounds of identified attachment to the imbalanced, "densified" pleasures of physical existence in itself). And in *Star Wars*, Vader operates out of the artificial satellite of the Death Star. This Death Star is itself a transparent symbol of Daath. For remember, in the film even Han Solo is fooled at first into thinking that the artificial satellite is a *real planet*. And the sole, dotted Sefirah of Daath

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is so rendered in order to indicate its actual artificiality. It is called *the false Sefhirah*; for it is not really a center (as the head or heart centers, etc.) but a place of transition, the elastic variable of the void-factor functioning across a sliding scale of coordinate integration and alignment so as to alternatively mask or disclose the absolute, creative Zero-status of Being through the subconscious patterning processes of the multidimensional axis of Consciousness.

"Sefhirah" is etymologically associated with *sapphire*, so that it not only signifies a *sphere* of Being; it indicates the self-luminance or starry radiance of the crystalline worlds and zones of existence. The false Sefhirah Daath is therefore literally a *false star*, an artificial satellite in the Qabalistic system. The Death Star hangs suspended in the stellate emptiness of cosmic space just as *Daath* hovers at that abyssal juncture between the Sapphire-stone of *Binah* and the parallel, zodiacal sphere or star-house of *Chokmah*.

This correspondence of Vader's "Death Star", neatly accounts for an incident in the movie which brought about many objections regarding logical impropriety when first seen, i.e. the appearance in the trash-compactor sequence of the serpentine *Dia-noga* that harrowed the heroes but which seemed to have been brought on specially for that occasion in the most artificial, *deus-ex-machina* manner; for how, many cogent observers objected at the time, could a very organic serpentine worm such as *Dia-noga* show up in a marsh of garbage and refuse which was hardly a natural bog, but simply a room in the artificial satellite? Understanding the Death Star as the *Daathli juncture* accounts for the presence of that strange, serpentine apparition not by the critical light of daytime logic but, most appropriately, by the nocturnal glow of *dream-logic*. If we understand the Death Star through our dream-consciousness, the subliminal and symbolizing power of movies becomes much more apparent, and takes on a scale much beyond the scope of *personal* contribution. In this way we can immediately "see" the presence of *Dia-noga* in the trash-compactor as the fateful presence of the risen kundalini-serpent, worrying the vulnerable locus at the back of the head. Dream logic. The kundalini-serpent playing at the artificial juncture of Daath.

Moreover, the specific designation of *Dia-noga's* locale as the *trash-compactor*, aligns the symbolism very powerfully with the properties of the *qliphoth* or "imbalanced shells" of negative cosmic forces, known to gain access at the tremulous juncture of Daath owing to their correspondence with the instinctual-vital energies of the basal brain and correlative abdominal-reproductive centers. The *Qliphoth* are literally considered the debris or "trash" discharged from negative, debilitated or imbalanced psychic-emotional patterns. (This glaring anomaly of ordinary logic stuck into the narrative like a sore thumb, does indeed recommend rather strongly that incalculable factor of a hidden presence working some subliminal influence in the generation of the film - which became, after all, one of the top five box-office draws of all time).

"Princess Leia" gives us another strong Qabalistic reference; esoteric interpretation of the Biblical "Rachel and Lean" indicates two aspects of the very *Sekinah* (or energy, power) of the Divine. *Sekinah* is linked etymologically to the Hindu term *Salai*, a designation of the cosmic energy that becomes locked into place and thus

"exiled" as a fixed framework of focus in the kundalini-nucleus (the etymological linkage thus infers a *shared spiritual understanding* of the "separate" ancient cultures, that is scarcely noticed or acknowledged contemporarily at all). The *Sekinah* of course is the power of God to which is imputed the feminine gender, classically "exiled" to the wilderness of physical existence. The exiled *Sekinah* indeed accounts for the field of physical existence itself, just as the coiled kundalini-sakti holds the exclusive, physical framework of focus "in place" as a summary energy-nucleus at the perineum (encoding the coordinate sequences and filtrate patterns of perception ordered through the centers of compound focal alignment situated, multidimensionally, across the conscious axis).

In her exile or "descended" form the *Sekinah* is denominated the "Divine Footstool", and this corresponds exactly with the Hindu *Padmasana*, literally "divine footstool". Rachel and Lean represent the dual potentiality of the *Sekinah* "exiled" into identification with the physical field; they signify respectively the barren and mournful or bright and devoted *Sekinah*, the potentiality of the encoiled Lifepower to "turn away" from the luminous Aspect of the Divine (figuratively situated "above" at the innate Void-locus of spiritual awakening) or to turn toward It in liberative surrender. Just to make this correspondence all the more unmistakable, "Princess Leia" is given the full name of *Leia Organa*, making her "exiled" identification with the organic or material sphere symbolically patent.

While Rachel then "mourns for her lost children" (the souls suffering the delusive exile of exclusive physical existence locked into the survivalist "vital zone"), Leah aspires tirelessly toward active liberation. This "Princess" is indeed the Bride and Princess (the *actual*, Qabalistic designation) of *Malkuth*, the lowest Sefhirah of the Tree of Life corresponding to the Material World and specifically indicated as the "place of exile" of God's creative power, the *Sekinah*.

It shouldn't be overlooked that we come to find out, in the sequels *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, that both Luke and Leia are the offspring of none other than Darth Vader. This easily suggests that Leia, in her form as the "exiled princess" of the physical sphere, represents the responsive energy of the *Sekinah* creatively work-

ing out and *living out* the consequences, through the organic tissue of subconscious patterns, of the very conscious and deliberate apostasy of the "Dark Lord of the Sith", initiated will and awareness gone perversely awry. Leia's predicament is precisely a result of her being the offspring of Vader the *father* of physical suffering and exile is the "initiated" or conscious application of the powers of will and desire, for purposes of personal aggrandizement and conquest. It gives practical birth to the field of material delusion or functional imbalance, by borrowing upon the power of void-nature exclusively for the *knowledge* it can yield in its barrier-dissolving permeability; for knowledge (don't forget, *Daath* is "knowledge") enlists the value of Void only insofar as its efficacy can be a help in acquiring the practical means of securing causal connections for purposes of mastery and domination. Knowledge (*Daath*) does not ask of its very own void-character the luminous insight of real *Understanding* or *Wisdom* (the upper Sefhiroh).

The fact that Vader is also *Luke's* father, gives away another very significant piece of Qabalistic correspondence; for if Luke, like Obi, represents a solar hero owing to the fact that his name means Light, then he is the potential initiate of Tiphereth (the sphere of the Sun) as well; and indeed, we see through the plot development that Luke becomes a strong candidate for initiation into the overtly occult, Jedi brotherhood. But a title of Tiphereth is *Eloah va-daath*, showing very emphatically that it derives directly, through the "middle pillar", from the abyssal pseudo-Sefhirah *Daath* immediately above it. Thus the "solar ego" of Tiphereth, the potential candidate of illumining initiation, is tintured already with a questionable derivation, an ambiguous heritage; for not only is it the "product" of the preceding *legitimate* Sefhiroh Kether - Chokmah - Binah; in its projection as the centralizing vehicle of self-reference in the system of created worlds "below the abyss" it has become automatically and inevitably tainted with a capacity for aggravated imbalance and inflationary self-aggrandizement. (We see this reflected in Luke's impatience, his frequent vacillation and tendency not to listen, etc.).

Thus in order to "resurrect" the true Father, restoring the former Order (the disbanded and repudiated Jedi) to a renewed and whole glory in



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himself, Luke finds he must overcome the dark aspect, the tincturing "Vader" within his own personality (a challenge made quite explicit in the cave sequence of *Empire*). Indeed in the end (*Return of the Jedi*) in a finale which was unsatisfactory to many, we even literally see Vader "reborn" as it were in Light and restored in brotherhood with a glorified Obi-Wan. Narratively this may have been forced; it is only *symbolically* that it is assuredly correct.

Luke's overcoming the internal factors of negativity and imbalance so as to restore the original Wholeness and Order of the Father, is exactly analogous to the Egyptian "Horus" myth; for Horus is the falcon god or Hawk-headed Lord who vanquishes the chthonic force of Set, resurrecting the dismembered Father Osiris and restoring him to his sacred throne. Both Osiris and Horus are solar deities. The Son integrated with the Totality of the Father is the formula of Ab-

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Ben; i.e. Ab (father) and Ben (son) fuse so as to form the Path which successfully crosses the Abyss connecting *Tiphereth* and *Chokmah* through the formula of Aben, which means Stone and refers to the confectioned Philosopher's Stone, the Great Work Accomplished.

### I Am All-One

Speaking of the Hawk-headed deity Horus, this brings us to the other "hero" of the trilogy, Han Solo. Considering Han's caprice, his virtually comic vacillation between pure self-interest and selfless help, we might be tempted to find in "Han" the short-hand signature of Hanuman, the mischievous monkey-god of Hindu mythology equated with that restless trickster the "thinking mind" itself. In this case, considering the conspicuously autoerotic activity of the monkey, Han's behavior can frequently be accounted for by assuming "Han" is an abbreviation of hand, which when engaged in "Solo" business completes an adequately graphic metaphor of his generally self-enveloped attitude.

But "Han" can also easily suggest Had, the abbreviated form of Hadit. "Had" in Persian literally means "limit"; it is apotheosized in the aforementioned *Book of the Law* as an important ontological principle. There it signifies the "atomic soul", the "point infinitely small" which is the vehicular basis of manifestation, the "heart" of the world and functional median as the centralizing locus of selfhood. The declaration of Hadit in the *Book of the Law* is "I am alone"; thus Han (Had) Solo (Alone). And let us not forget the most important clue of all; Han is the pilot (soul) of the *Millennium Falcon*. Could this "falcon" be the falcon-god or Hawk-headed Lord Horus quite specifically, after all?

We may answer in the emphatic probable; according to the doctrine associated with A. Crowley's *Book of the Law*, this Age of Aquarius we are ostensibly entering upon is esoterically identified as *the Aeon of Horus*, the Crowned and Conquering Child (i.e. victorious Luke Skywalker, etc.). Is this Aeon of the Hawk-headed Lord not represented very conspicuously in the vehicle of the *Millennium Falcon*, which jumps hyperspace with ease and "made the Kessel run in 12 parsecs"?

The very name *Star Wars* now resonates to the fact that the Sefiroth of the Tree of Life signify stellate or self-radiant spheres, and that Horus is a specifically *martial* deity. (You may figure out such things as the "Wookiee, Chewbacca", "R2D2" and "C3PO" for yourself, for I'd hate to deprive you of the possible morsels of pleasure yet left in your newfound love of Qabalah, as well as your respect for George Lucas as a premier Qabalist! On the other hand I can't resist the clue that the *robots* ought to be considered as representative of the *dual autonomic currents* of the subconscious systems, especially since the autonomic is *servitor* of the conscious axis....and don't forget to do a Qabalah on those letters and numbers).

Oh yes; don't hound poor George Lucas about "secretly being a great Qabalistic initiate", etc. I think we can rest assured that the economic hypothesis of "subliminal influence" is adequate to explain the peculiar facts of *Star Wars*; after all, did you catch *Howard the Duck*!

*Star Wars*..... \*\*\*\* 1/2  
*The Empire Strikes Back*..... \*\*\*\*\*  
*Return of the Jedi*..... \*\*\*

## THE WIZARD OF OZ



Even though it's only our second, this may as well have been called the Anniversary Issue: for not only is it the 20th anniversary of Woodstock (in August) and of the Moonwalk but it is the year of Batman's 50th anniversary, *and...jnirabile dictu* most psychedelic of all it is the 50th anniversary of the theatrical premiere of *Wizard of Oz*; also a babe of the August moon.

MGM is issuing a special commemorative video of the *Wizard* complete with out-takes, interviews and an improved color processing; though this is undoubtedly a welcome "new lease" for those who've loved the *Wizard* but are close to burnout after the umpteenth-millionth annual t.v. exposure, it would be premature to announce the exhaustion of the standard contents of this classic on the basis of mere repetition. There's always a lot of the op Charlatan can show us - but first of all it would be wise to affix the crystal ball of the Dream Eye to our forehead, in commemoration of the fact that L. Frank Baum, the *Wizard*'s author, received the entire saga as a dream delivered whole and recollected the next morning.

Coming, as this classic tale does then, directly from the dream mind, we refer you first to a refresher course in the implication of such origin (cf. *MOVIE AND DREAM: THE QABALAH OF STAR WARS* at the beginning of this review section) and then suggest an immediate plunge without compunction into the sea of the Symbolizing Psyche, the well-stocked waters of archetype.

In our less-familiar/wyc/icc snorkeling through the tides and turns of *The Wizard* this time-round, we encounter *Toto* first, of course, the efficient cause of the whole adventure. It's our love of the *Dog*, the irrepressible yapping little *vital* aspect of our Being after all, that gets us into our life-situations in the first place from the callow end of the Pool. "Freud" might even humorlessly pursue the very suggestive analogy that the vitriolic Ms. Gulch (doubling, through the great Margaret Hamilton, as the Witch in the fantasy sequences) functions as the repressive "anti-cathexis" of the super-ego, inhibiting the lap-happy Id and forcing it to "pop-up" in a flight of displacement to another level carrying the ego (Dorothy) pell mell along with it.

Since Dorothy is knocked unconscious we can literally assume we're skrying the terms of the deep mind, when the screen bursts into the hallucinatory colors of Oz. The vortex of sleep has set her right down in the middle of a tumultuous set of conditions replete with their own unique and

extensive World of implication, of which moreover she is a central participant, a key figure - even though she's apparently an Innocent born of mere accident, fresh on the scene without a dram of prior knowledge or complicity. Exactly as in the Dream of Life Itself, the protagonist-innocent utterly ignorant of the whole affair and simply wanting to go home, is nonetheless informed she's responsible for a *death*; not a second in Oz and she's already violated taboo ground....she's slain the sister of the most sinister element in the whole Land, the wicked Witch of the West - and all because the *very vehicle* by which she came to Oz seems to have set down plunk on the pate of the devilish daughter of the East. If the *Eastern* witch could be considered bad, Glenda the Good Witch informs Dorothy helpfully, then her surviving sister (sure to be out instantly for revenge) is twice the trouble at the very least. (May we assume here the general attitude of helpfulness of the Good Witch and gently suggest that, Dream-wise, the East represents the occult dimension of reality, the inner planes, the nonmanifest worlds of the so-called Unconscious from which Dorothy had just precipitously "materialized" in her "flying house" - i.e. the prototype body-pattern of the astral-flight Soul Vehicle. Therefore the unknown "threat" posed by that mysterious Dimension of Being has already closed on her, before-the-fact, precisely in conjunction with her waking up to this new incarnation in the Land of Oz. The Witch of the West therefore signifies, as does the West itself, the field of *exteriority*, the overt or manifested planes of matter and all the potential mischief of which the *material* phase of Reality is capable. By simply opening her eyes to the rich color and surreal texture of the "manifest" field of reality [which, remember, is but the *dream* of another, scarcely remembered but deeply longed-for Existence] Dorothy seems to have "escaped" the implied perils of a Being about which she wasn't even aware; but *only* to be delivered up to the characteristic perils of this materialized plane proper, signified by the Western Witch of Oz. In very Kafka-like fashion, Dorothy has awakened wide-eyed to an unknown world wherein, by that *very awakening*, she's already responsible for having "occulted" an entire Being - and apparently has to answer for that inadvertent impropriety to Another.)

The key at once to her protection and her imperilment, (and ultimately to her Return) seems to lie in her possession of the curious Ruby Slippers - a style of footwear the Western Witch appears for some reason to particularly covet. And what, in the lexicon of dream-logic, could the Ruby Slippers possibly be? If we remember that, having imprisoned Dorothy in her castle the witch avidly tries to wrench away the slippers only to be startlingly *burned*, we have all the clue we need.

Red is the color of fire, and of blood. These "slippers" represent then the very, fiery energy and Life-force of the *spiritual current* that becomes ensouled (oren-soled, you know) as the nuclear code of physical polarization at the perineum, and by extension through the legs and feet: the *Sakti* or *Skinah* (see the *Star Wars* review) in either Hebrew or Hindu traditions is referred to as the *Divine Footstool*. The feet are, in these and many other esoteric teachings, powerfully charged centers correlated with the nestling force of the *serpent-fire* (invaginated, at the basal "chakras", into a self-enfolded "lock-in" of mirroring multi-dimensional fields and patterning currents holding the compound focal grid of the "physical" - or earth dimension - in place.) Thus the "feet" represent

and functionally *embody* the creative power of the Worlds, through the action of which the energy-psyche of physical cognition is grounded. (Note that the "slippers" appear and come into Dorothy's possession at the precise moment that the flying vehicle - the Soul-housing - in which she's transported *drops to the ground*. And they belonged, formerly, to the *Eastern* witch - i.e. the principle of nonmanifestation, the "occult" or hidden side of things - notice we don't *see* the face of the Eastern Witch, only her feet or the *lowest* form of her semi-manifestation). And Dorothy is continuously cajoled to "surrender" the Ruby Slippers to the Negative (i.e., succumb to the conventional threats, blandishments and enticements of physical existence by allowing the precious LifePower to be engaged in the spells and distractive delusions of the physical realm). The Witch, it is, obvious, wishes to use the magical potency of this twinkletoe-power toward her own, self-serving ends. And of course, it would be a lot *easier* for Dorothy to surrender - if it wasn't for the fact that she is propelled onward by an unremitting purpose, a potent recollection: she *has to return Home*. And, as it turns out, she *needs* the Ruby Slippers to be able to do this. *This* is why the slippers couldn't be given into the hands of the Negative being, and monopolized toward the "material" purposes to which the fiery force as a *downflowing* (or magical, manifesting) power is put. The same energy which is "locked up" in the grounded, actional modes of the "feet" or vital extensions of Being, is instrumental in effecting the ultimate Awakening to the true Home - which was all along the "purpose" of the unceasing Going of those rubious walking-shoes.

As in the proper *gestalt*ing of any good dream, the supplementary characters and supporting cast can be considered aspects of the protagonist, in this case the "dreamer" Dorothy. Thus the tin man, scarecrow and cowardly lion represent not only emphasized traits drawn through specific personalities from the universal spectrum of psychic types and tendencies; they mirror significant portions of the subject-mind through which the experience of Oz is narratively reflected.

Keeping this in mind, do you know how the tin man got his heart, the scarecrow got his brain, and the cowardly lion his courage? Why of course! we hear some of the readership leap brightly at the recollection: the *Wizard* gave those things to them, in the respective forms of a ticking clock, a diploma from a diploma-mill, and a medal-of-honor. If in fact you quickly answered this way, we must beep the null-buzzer; in truth the Wizard's little token awards were trinkets of a telling parody quite illuminative of human psychology, if we but look a little closer. For such clearly superfluous baubles were precisely *not* the means whereby the trio acquired their longed-for traits. They had already *achieved* those coveted attributes, brought them to blossom from the apparent "absence" of their untested inertia in the seedbed of simple potential; for it's not so much that one doesn't "possess" these desired traits, as that one hasn't *drawn them out yet* in the only way they can be accurately "tested for" i.e. in actual trials, tribulations, dangerous effort and unremitting *work*.

Having *passed through* those trials and succeeded out of love for Dorothy, they had *manifested* the respective traits most coveted - which is the sole way in which the presence of such traits may be vouchsafed, i.e. *in actual expression*. The Wizard's "awards" come as an obvious parodic anticlimax and point out clearly, to those

who can *see*, the distinct difference between the way in which the ego presumes to *ratify* the presence of particular, ideal-identified traits projectively presumed to "fulfill it", and the manner in which such values are *actually* realized and fulfilled. The ego looks at a value such as "courage", "brains", "heart" etc. as a *possession*, something to which it would ideally correspond by consensual validation; thus the ego's basic project is *to be ratified*, to be confirmed by the general domain of Other in the form of a significant Authorization. Astute analysis shows that, underlying everything, this is the *whole* of what comprises the ego's compelling project, its continuous drive through the hollow self-tunnel of "incompletion" or existential inadequacy. And yet the domain of Other (the totality-of-the-world that seems beyond the personal, subjective "prehensibility" of voluntaristic regulation) is in fact quite powerless to confer the required values, in the very way that the Wizard was exposed in his perfect ineptitude. The developed values of the Soul are *not a gratis boon* of "Saktipat", of some wizardry conferral of energy-amplification; nor are they obtainable as correct answers to a catechistic recital. "I'm a very good man", says the Wizard, "it's just that I'm not a very good Wizard." Yet in a sense he performs his function perfectly: he is a very good Wizard indeed, he *is* the wonderful Wizard of Oz: for when Dorothy and the companions come to him to inquire how to obtain what they want (with Dorothy's desire to *return home* foremost) the Wizard imperiously "refuses" to confer their aims as *gratis* gifts but instead sends them off with an insistence that *they fulfill conditions*; he commands that they *do the impossible*, go right into the heart of what they were scrupulously trying to avoid and obtain the wicked Witch's *very broomstick*. And it's only through this most severe of trials, concerning matters of no less moment than Life and Death, that the little group finds the courage, heart and intelligence in compassionate camaraderie to face what they just couldn't face, and accomplish what - without a *Wizard's* ensorcelling help - they just couldn't accomplish.

Glenda, the Good Witch, don't forget, reveals the secret of the Ruby Slippers; it is through them that Dorothy could have returned home any time she wished! Indeed, it's through her experience that Dorothy is subsequently able to exclaim to Aunt Em and the hired hands "if it isn't here, right here at home, it isn't anywhere." Do we hear a distinct spiritual reverberation? Do we hear a persistent if paradoxical refrain, reiterated down the halls of time from Saints and Zen masters right through to Krishnamurthi and Ramana Maharshi and "Wei Wu Wei", to the effect that reality is already Whole, Being is complete and Perfect before the fact and there is nothing we can do to "complete" it, nothing we can add to it or subtract from it that will make it anything other than what it eternally *Is*? It is precisely this declaration, delineating the "awakened" point of view, that has led to the sardonic spectacle of quite ordinary egos attempting to capitalize on the apparent effortlessness and gratuity of the Illuminated Refrain by forthwith "dropping everything", declaring their own Realization of sublime completion on the spot and then, (still suffering of course from the total commitment of the force of Identity to all the partial and preferential profiles of ego-identification cast in the conventional, cliched psychological mold), laboring surreptitiously in the pseudo-spontaneity of a queasy "freedom" to elicit some con-

firmation, some tacit or elaborate validation from the displacing field of Other for that "awakening" which tosses in its persistent, self-deluding sleep.

Even many of the *teachers* of such a spiritual truth, precisely those such as Krishnamurthi et al., have *not* clearly noticed an inbuilt trick of that truth, i.e. the refractory fact that the complexes of common self-reflective ego-consciousness characteristic of human psychology at this stage of development, are instances of the great over-spreading Tree of that Truth in *seed-form*. The *teed* can't arbitrarily drop the conditions of its germinal encapsulation and proclaim itself equivalent to the oak. It must be *planted* in the whole Ground of that Truth, fed and watered, tended and nurtured, cultivated and cared for. A *process* of germination has to take place, and the mode of *time* is precisely the device Eternity employs to draw that sapling presence into Conscious continuity with the "absolute instantaneity" of Its own, all-pervasive Being. Yes, *technically* Dorothy could have "gone home any time", for "home" is the Present in-dwelling of Consciousness. It is immediate, unmediated Awareness of the absolute conformance of everything with the Self-presence of Consciousness - the intimate "hearth-and-home" identity of everything in continuous unity with and as the Occasion of Conscious Self-presence.

And yet to really know that Truth as its *Living Expression* (i.e. in order to really "wake up" back in Kansas rather than experience a pseudo-awakening only to find you're still in the bewildering Oz of your ordinary, excruciating psychology) you have to have employed *ike. shoesproperly!* You have to have been tested in the persistence with which you valued and protected them, honored them and enlisted them steadfastly in a dedicated movement toward home; you can't have misused them, or surrendered them in a trade of convenience to the employ of the Negative principle. It is through that *steadfastpersistence* and focused undissuadeable *direction* in your employment of the Ruby Slippers (i.e. the fiery Lifeforce of the mind-body pattern effectively focusing and "locking-in" the totality of Conscious Being to the partial, occluded perspective of the material "Mystery", the manifest Land of Oz) that you develop the requisite values, cultivate the necessary characteristics whereby the *deflective Negative may be overcome*.

For you cannot simply plop down and arbitrarily declare you're home. This much we *do* learn from the *Wizard of Oz*, the Negative stands effectually in the way. The "evil" is in effective control of the Land in the same way that the negatively-polarized psyche of conventional ego-psychology *lays exclusive claim* upon the magical powers and spiritual properties locked up in those Ruby Shoes! When however the very stringent, quite demanding and even "impossible" work is done, the necessary values of Soul will have been developed and demonstrated: the lion will indeed be courageous; the scarecrow will indeed be intelligent; and the tin man, yes, the tin man will have a heart of which he can be certain, for it will most certainly be broken.

When the Being is thus integrated, vivified and drawn to an intensification through which it is capable of facing the Negative on Its own grounds for the sake of "another", then it may be that the

Ruby Slippers (always *technically* capable of the instantaneous Restoration of Dorothy to her Home due to the fact they continuously stand on

unific Ground) will in fact be *functionally* fit to effect that Recovery. And no "magical conferral" in authoritative Validation by the Other-expertise of a Wizard, is at all needed to accomplish this ultimate feat of Sublime Magic.

*Here* then is the Way in which one merits the longed-for, Motherly care of that One who awaits, Who is There all along, the gracious Aunt Em; for Aunt Em (Em is full spelling of the letter M) is simply A.M. The morning, the dawn, the natural or spontaneous awakening of the Sunrise. And it is also of course AM, the declarative Presence of that which Is, i.e. Eternal Being.

One last interesting thing: since this reviewer is now forced to confess he's never actually *read* the *Wizard*, he must ask on the basis of his viewing of the movie just *who* had been so curiously *prescient*, so perfectly predictive? Was it L. Frank himself, or the screenwriters or LeRoy or Garland or Victor Fleming? For take a closer look: the Witch seems to prefigure the foul design of a diabolic intelligence visited some decades later upon the real world; she issues her plague upon the lowering skies of Oz, carried by winged *green monkeys* • and listen carefully! there's a curious line that simply hangs there in the movie like a severed nerve, for there is no followup or further reference in the story: the allusion seems to stand alone, an almost uncanny insertion (perhaps there *were* scenes of continuity that were simply cut out for "time"; but the allusion itself was then curiously preserved, as if by oversight). For as the winged green monkeys loft into the sky which they progressively darken with their very, proliferating presence, the witch cryptically commands: "send my insect ahead to take the fight out of them" (!). In light of such unprecedented modern plagues as AIDS (alleged to have originated with the African green monkey) and the concomitant general weakening of the immunology system, the Witch's declaration seems to shadow a far-reaching design for a kind of Negative conquest. Hmmmmm...(see next month's Halloween Issue when the NTC takes on Spook Central).

*The Wizard of Oz.....\*\*\*\*\**

Don't miss our Halloween issue when *The New Thunderbird Chronicle* takes on SPOOK CENTRAL:

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## WHAT BATMAN IS EVERYONE WATCHING?



I started a joke  
That started the whole world crying...\*

### BATMAN

*Back to the dream caves.*

Bat first, let's take a look at the sociological phenomenon of Batman's astonishing popularity....hold it! Isn't it possible *to just review the movie*, and keep the possible value of the film completely separate from its effect on the public, its economic and political impact, its influence on the weather?

Well, actually, no. It *would* have been possible to review the movie *qua* movie *before* its explosion into "le phenomene sociologique" (as Francois Truffaut dubbed the UFO incident in *Close Encounters*). But this plebeian film critic didn't get into the previews with a press pass; no, being a man of the masses, he watched the ol' Caped Crusader down in the trenches with the genera! public, and by that time it was too late to keep separate the solitary phenomenon of a shining bubble from the high-tide billows of popularity in which the film of froth was subsequently swamped.

So first of all, one must ask with a little Marvin Gaye pivot: what's going on?

Does anyone seem to recall how, not too long ago, preview audiences watching the trailer for Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* became wildly anticipatory for the film's release on the basis of the fantastic cityscapes, etc. (with which, incidentally, the *Batman* matte-work has now been often compared) only to leave the picture high and dry shortly after its premiere by a word-of-mouth and general critical disclaimer that the movie was too "murky"? Well, hey, Dudes; just seven years after, it seems neither critics nor audiences are so uniformly sensitive toward the merely "murky". For not only is *Batman* a deliberate *noire* film, of

a richly miasma] murk that makes *Blade Runner* twinkle like a Christmas-tree; it is often cruel and mean-spirited (don't start up on your dear reviewer yet - this isn't even the criticism) in much the same way that Paul Verhoeven's *Robocop* was peculiarly remorseless in its pursuit of the gratuitously nasty. In case you haven't thought about it, what becomes of Jerry Hall's model fate, the death-mask dressup in which it's all done replete with a litter of photographed wardead gassed into closeup grimaces of risus sardonius, leaves a tinge of cyanic green about the gills much like the chemically-altered epidermis of the Joker's complexion; and the accompanying "mirth" which Nicholson's performance squeezes in a milk of ambiguity out of the audience, is almost in schizoid dissociation from the necrotic breath breathed off the screen.

This is hardly the kind of fare which audiences have "traditionally" made boxoffice champions - by comparison the "horrors" of *Jaws* was a jack-in-the-box, while *Raiders* and *E.T.* were positively ingratiating. Nor is it really possible to write off the public's record-breaking response solely to the Pavlovian conditioning of pre-film hype and saturation merchandising; for at best the gates jump open to a fast start under pressure of such periodic campaigns. But if there isn't something in the "product" itself to sustain the enthusiasm to a snowball surge and induce the very necessary repeat business, the genuine "phenomene sociologique" does not automatically ensue (witness the De Laurentiis campaign for *King Kong*, or even the merchandising putsch for *Star Wars III*, which comparatively "sagged" at the boxoffice after an opening burst primed with the powder of pure anticipation).

But what is there in *this* Bat-product? Don't misunderstand the question; it does not imply that the film has no merit - indeed, such a question doesn't really address the merit of the film at all. The question of actual merit would lead us to declare that *Blade Runner*, for example, was a wonderful movie; but one of the things which distinguished it as "wonderful" was the powerfully dark, lethally dense atmosphere of its view - precisely the characteristic which at the time was said to "turn the public off".

The real question here, if properly understood, admits to a Mystery. We're standing in the presence of a wildly popular Sphinx.

For one thing, consider. Warner Bros., the producer of the film, was reported to be in desperate straits and conceived *Batman* as the means of bailing itself out, not only out of the boxoffice doldrums but the wrecking yards of receivership. Now, when you are deliberately planning a vehicle which has to hit critics and audiences in such a way as to make an initial splash and subsequent tsunami on the magnitude of nine figures and rolling, simply in order to tread, you would suppose that conservatism and strict adherence to precedent would be the key. You'd think that computer-averaged, statistically-researched across-the-board compromise would be the watchword.

It comes somehow to your attention that it is DC Comics' 50th anniversary of *Batman*, and you immediately recall the popularity the t.v. series briefly enjoyed in the '60s. So far so good. You'd assume that the thing to do would be to swiftly wed those facts to some "formula" derived from the salient components of the top ten moneymakers of all time (in other words, break into the Spielberg-

Lucas safety-deposit vaults where the celluloid Rosetta Stone is kept).

But Nooooooooo. Somehow, inexplicably, you decide to do *Batman* as film noir. Somehow, inexplicably, you pass up Schwarzenegger and Stallone for...Michael Keaton? Somehow, inexplicably, you decide, whether consciously or unconsciously, to make *Batman* all about -poison!

For yes, that is what *this Batman* is ultimately about. It is about poison. It breathes poison. (Back off; this isn't the criticism either). It has, altogether, the frozen grin of the Deathhead sporting crossbones-clavicle on a bottle of thallium. The great "body" of Gotham City, looking like an hallucinatory New York out of Lang's *Metropolis*, is backed up, trash impacted, plugged with industrial and human debris so that the ordinary anonymity and impersonal austerity of mountainous, metropolitan architecture takes on the dun-dead look of an anatomy text coldly viewing the dissected viscera of some constipated Alien.

"What this city needs, is an enema," the Joker observes quite cogently - after all, it's not for nothing that *Batman's* dossier on ne: Jack Napier notes his high intelligence; it's the implicit statement being made by that intelligence in the design of its demented plot, that holds the secret dream-key to the whole movie.

### In The Bladder Of The Joker's Boutonniere

For one can have no quarrel with *what* the Joker perceives, from the high-aerie perspective of his murder-acquired suite; the city is indeed dying of its own unassimilable waste; mankind is already all-but-trashed. Such "high" intelligence from the imperious remove of its money-insulated viewpoint, can't be faulted in the cold clarity of its vision. Intelligence that technically elevated, perceives correctly - with a great deal more incisiveness than the middling muddle being meditated by the fume-addled masses below.

No, one can't fault the clarity of vision; the city indeed needs an enema. Yet the conclusions which are drawn from the counsel of such an intelligence operating entirely *without a heart*, are indeed quite utterly insane.

First of all, how did the City *become* so hazily contaminated? The very mind that observes how "backed up" it is, had a direct hand in the proceedings. The movie starts out, after all, with an investigation of racket-control in the chemical industry. We see that there is no effectual *policing* of the offending businesses, since it's quickly demonstrated that law-enforcement (in the form of a noir homage to Welles' Captain Vargas in *A Touch of Evil*) dances to industry's tune, serving its requirements - and both the tune and the requirements are equal to Money.

Indeed the culprit is not immune to the conditions he causes; the over-the-edge dementia that gives the fatal, cyanic tinge to the Joker's intellect as well as to his complexion comes about as the result of a perfect stroke of justice: he plunges into a bile-green vat which serves to freeze the flesh of his severed facial nerves into a perpetual, grinning mask. It is the *very logic* of that cold intelligence weighing everything on the scale of money, which backs up on itself and irredeemably injects its own bloodstream with the poison it has propagated everywhere. Having poisoned itself with its cold objectivity, its worship of the aloofness purchased by - and characteristic of - a Power without heart, it comes to *love that poison for its own sake*. The poison has *become* its bloodstream. What

everyone else seems to *die from*, has transmogrified into the Joker's life-juice. He feeds on it. Take note.

What, one must ask, is the audience *watching* when it views the Joker's "plot" unfold? What does the audience come back and back in a ritual summer compulsiveness to *see*, when the Joker is shown going about his blissful business mixing poisons and mortal toxins into the hairspray and foundation makeup of a populace quite equal in implicit identity to the multitudes packing the theater-houses?

And the *secret* - the secret of all that poison! How indeed does the Joker *do* it? For one can never be sure which product will contain the clownish surprise! It is only *Batman*, *Batman* alone, who figures it out: it's in the *combination*. No spray or lipgloss alone may do it (remember?); but several such products in *combination* may suddenly react, and the ghoulish result leaves a dead newscaster on the live airwaves set stiff in sardonicus midway through some tragic item.

### The Sound Of No-Face Laughing

Something here should sound vaguely familiar; for the filmmakers are only reporting on the real-life formula. The toxic effects from which everyone, on a world-wide scale, presently suffers, don't derive simply from discreet byproducts that can be identified and isolated; the poisons that arc smelted and packaged, refined and harvested, ejected and ingested incessantly through the sum-total of industrial living, work such thorough subversion of the immunology system (and in the process produce such unique and resistant ailments) owing to a synergistic interaction that simply couldn't be accomplished by each operating independently, i.e. in the manner of the standard linear model which mainstream medicine insists on imposing so as to focus on "the" reductive cause, the isolated irritant. Due to the same blinders which have served over time to produce the intensified synthesization of targeted objects for limited if profitable use or specialized effect, neither official science nor mainstream medicine have yet developed theoretical eyes adequate to view the dilemma in its proper dimension.

It is for this reason that the Joker, underworld master and crime-czar of the Industrial Chemistry-set, can impart his lethal humor with quite invisible panache, with utterly silent and undetected effect. Only *Batman* seems to be able to see the *gestalt*, the Way of combination and synergistic reinforcement; for everyone else seems to be looking in hypnotic left-brain fashion for the isolated factor, the "irreducible particle", the underlying "entity".

Only "Batman" sees it; he alone can figure it out. And why?

### The Unbelievable Unevenness Of Bat-Opposites

By way of addressing ourselves to just that question, we should find it interesting that more than one of the major reviewers of *Batman* objected to the apparent imbalance in the respective portraits of Bruce Wayne and the Joker; the rictus-riddled Napier, they uniformly objected, was "explained" in his villainy much more thoroughly than the filmmakers apparently saw fit to "explain" the eponymous hero! But is this really so much of a justified criticism, as it is a simple failure (common to critics) to take the actual premise of the story into consideration on its own terms?

Batman is the hero of this piece; after all, fellows, the movie is named after *him*. And in the *story*, he is a very mysterious figure to the Gotham denizens. What motivates him to "good" (if it is *indeed* good) is not at all self-evident, nor is it supposed to be. In the *story*, he is an enigma. In contradistinction to this the Joker, evil as he is, is hardly an enigma. The only "mystery" hovering about him is *how* he does it, not *why*.

No one really has any question about Negativity. It is taken for granted. Its cold self-serving is easy to assess. The filmmakers are - at least instinctively - correct. There is no mystery about this. Evil isn't just *banal*; it's actually more *understandable* to present sensibilities, saturated in the wholesale neglect of wanton self-poisoning, than is the motivation or even the *nature* of good. (Remember, half the city thinks Batman sucks the blood of his criminal "victims", making the latter more implicitly sympathetic than he is). Negativity is all too easy to come by, brooding, infantile self-serving is all too easy a reaction to the structural impasse created on all levels by that Negativity.

No, Bruce Wayne's persona is *not* explained adequately by his remark that "bats are survivors". Nor is it supposed to be. Since he is the focus of the movie in the explicit form of an enigma, then he represents a *challenge* to the viewer to *understand*. All the clues are plainly given. We know that he "turned to crime-fighting because he witnessed the brutal murder of his parents"; but we have to dig into the Dream Psyche of this epic screen-symbolization in order to understand the *extravagant dissociations* in linear logic and developmental motivation involved in becoming a bat. (Well, have you ever considered what it *takes* to become a bat?)

We must note then that bats "see" at night by a radar guidance-system. Analogically, Bruce

Wayne "sees" into the machinations of evil (the "nightside") in a way that no one else seems able. In another sense, the interior self-luminance or intuitive "moon-glow" of a higher-dimensional intelligence is baffling to the common mind; that mind views the workings of such an intelligence as an impenetrable darkness, a perfectly opaque Mystery. Bruce Wayne is associated symbolically with precisely that darkness; he alone apprehends the "non-linear" means by which the Joker creates his deadly effect, because *he too* operates in the dark!

In this sense, then, the filmmakers show us that Batman and the Joker operate upon the same, rarefied plane at opposite poles of the vertical divide; they are of comparable "high intelligence". They are a match in much the same way that Holmes and Moriarty were a match, respectively untouchable at their parallel summits, each alone and apart in the wisdom-perfection of his particular polarity. (If there happened to be a crowd-packed continent of distance between them it would inevitably be as if the crowd mysteriously thinned, dreamily dispersed all the while they drifted unerringly together - nothing in the world really existing to effectually intervene, each being the sole real test of the other's verity unto utter death - so that the one was, alone, the other's warrant as *unequalled distillate of the premise for which he stood*.)

This was brought symbolically alive, not *only* in the film (since the film draws on the background established in the comic), but especially on screen since the Wayne manor is portrayed as so immense, so foreboding and austere that even Bruce himself seems uncomfortable in it at times - and yet he corrects Vicki Vale that some of it is *very much* "him". In this way we see a definite parallel;

we are led to draw an *inference* in the case of Bruce Wayne, where we were shown explicitly the imperious self-isolation of Napier. Batman is, in the perfection of his own polarity, as isolated by its comparative uncommonness and grandeur as the Joker is isolated, by preference, in the coldness of his heart. Just consider for a minute: is Batman a "regular guy", a "man of the people"? Even *Superman* seems more gregarious and "connected" by comparison than Bruce Wayne.

### Like A Bat Out Of Heaven

There is another side to this same observation: and it's here that we *can* clearly locate the means of distinguishing between the Caped Crusader and his greasepaint nemesis. There were those who, for example, objected to the last scene of the movie, preferring that they'd simply cut to close at the point where the limousine pulls from the curb with Vicki Vale in the back seat on her way to meet Wayne; what such an objection can't comprehend, because it doesn't operate on the same Ever-ready Saf-teries, is that the closing shot shows something as specific and important as anything that went before: we've seen that Bruce is as susceptible to love as anyone - after all, he's the one with the *open* heart; but we're very emphatically shown that personal pleasure and private love-life will eternally have to "take a backseat" in the committed breast of "Batman" (whatever that may be in *its still* mysterious darkness, hmmm?) For we see him, in the end, outlined on a rooftop against the nightsky upon which glows, across a great full moon, the Batman insignia cast cloudward by the citizens' searchlight he'd given Gotham (and, in that giving, so sealed the primacy of his "eternal vigilance" - for, as he'd told V.V. earlier, "it seems no one else can do it".)

### The Same As Devoue Devoyer

Between Batman and the Joker, then, the assessment of the situation is much the same. What certain critics labelled their "similar insanities", thus inferring that their positions to either side of the positive-negative ledger were arbitrary, is in fact a shared clarity of vision (which certainly *looks* mad from the midline muddle of majority-consciousness, clinging to the conventional wisdom as if those preformed media-ingots could keep them afloat; what *isn't* mad is adamant adherence to the mirage of rotted standards festering openly outside the workday gates of the leaking power plant, the befouling factory next to which the schoolground strangely bubbles with some indescribable ooze; what is *in fact* mad is fearing for the loss of jobs and a diminished tax-base when your childrens' hair is dropping out, and they bathe in the broth of bonecancer.)

Within such a similar "clarity of vision", however, the Joker is quite without peer in his dementia. His response to the spreading vapors of anti-life enshrouding the city, that his own loveless activity has helped spawn, is to *become* it. His unique answer to the predicament, only incidentally expedited by his having fallen into the vat, is really just an extension of the general way in which he was always moving but blown up monumentally (and drawn to its logical extreme) by the exponent of cumulative effect - just as the general miasma propagated by the sanctioned outlawry of the chemical companies is a gross materialization of "the Joker's" own morbidly self-serving psyche.

The filmmakers, again whether by design or "guided accident", are showing something very important here that deserves a closer look. The

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Joker's "solution" to the encroaching atmosphere of death, is to *become it*. This is an acceleration of the whole predicament to another level, the addition of the dimension of *consciousness*, of *intent*. Note: the ghastly giien entrepreneur who runs the factories and mills and vats of ubiquitous death, is not some myopic personality, a "guy just like me" only insufficiently informed; he is not someone who simply has to be educated to the inevitable consequences of a short-sighted activity; he isn't someone operating on compensatory psychological mechanisms, or the reversible tack of rationalization. He isn't someone Lear-like in his preference for bad counsel or who simply refuses to see. He *sees* all too clearly; distorted perception is not his problem, nor is anything which can answer to some adjustive correction, the blandishments of reform.

He *loves what he does*: do you hear this for what it is? This is the only way, ultimately, to account for the militarists and manufacturers who insist with the relentlessness of golems on secretly or openly irradiating the food you eat as well as the food your children and their own children eat. No explanation, no matter how reasonable by the logic of profitable self-interest, can otherwise adequately assess the disingenuous suavity by which they attempt to sell the public on a rationale for oxidizing and mutating its already devitalized foodstuffs; no exposure of a Veiled Effort to come by the back door of Plutonium resources, no matter how factually firm, can account for the dimension of stark-staring madness behind it all. No, the "problem" of contemporary life has to be faced according to the real proportions informing it; and by measure of that scale it has to be confessed that the Joker - not your amenable Uncle Jack - showering money like Wall Street tickertape on the fume-filled streets of Gotham is clearly in charge of the Show.

The Joker, then, beholds the unmistakable face of Death and decides to lead its Parade; Batman, on the other hand, while certainly seeing the same thing is hardly on the same, "insane" wavelength, as some critics have suggested, since from the beginning it's demonstrated that his intent is toward the protection and awakening of all the slumbering citizens, alerting them as well as the "opposite element" to the clear terms of the situation. And how does he do that? "Tell them about me," he commands a cringing hood he's cornered on a rooftop: get the word around, make them think - and think again.

### Does "Blind As A Bat" Ring the Ol' Cathedral Belfry?

Having heard certain critics' objections to other aspects of the movie, one can only inquire as to what said critics might possibly have been watching - for in most cases it isn't even a *matter* of interpretation (which would be a legitimate juncture of differing) but of simply seeing what is up *on the screen*, and so noticing an actual point that the filmmakers were trying to put across at precisely the instance of the blind objection.

For example, one critic carped about the illogic of motivation or behavior, citing the scene in which the Joker showers money on the crowded Gotham streets in his nocturnal parade of poison-filled balloons; when the Joker is forced to stop, deprived of his balloons by the Batmobile, why - demanded the critic - doesn't the crowd jump the Joker and beat the tar out of him? Apparently the evidence of the senses is not enough for this mystic critic, who conjures away in one question the quite visible fact that the crowd is depicted, half-gassed

like ambulatory zombies from *Night Of The Living Dead*, still groping for the money! Doesn't it seem as if a specific point is being made here? Rather than the "illogical motivation" of flawed filming, the world disclosed upon the screen *this* reviewer saw was pointedly populated by dying humanoids clutching - out of the sheer automaticity of undis-suadeable habit - for the last-gasp buck.

In fact this scene was a very telling '80s update of the '60s *Magic Christian* (remember the Terry Southern adaptation, with Peter Sellers and Ringo Starr?) in which that eccentric billionaire and "Grand Guy, Guy Grand" threw tons of money into a boiling vat of pig excrement in the middle of the city, after which the cosmopolitan citizens dutifully dived with squeals of oinkish delight. It is very noticeable (and so most probably registers an intentional point) that in the comparable *Batman* scene the crowd-noise is subdued; the filmmakers distinctly resisted the most obvious sort of depiction in which the volume would be turned full-blast in amplification of every greedy grunt and salacious cheer of the marching multitudes. Rather, it seems as if the crowd is already zombified before the poisonous jets are discharged; everyone has already absorbed a couple decades of death-dust, so that the game-show grovel after the dollars is now sheer reflex. *This* crowd is running on *toxified memories* of piggishness. It doesn't "turn upon" the Joker and his men for the simple reason that it doesn't *see* who poisoned everyone, although the culprits are right out in the open; and it doesn't care. The last fog of semi-conscious life is fixed on the down-floating dollar bill. (This seems to be a pretty major point not to have noticed!)

The whole ethos of the movie in fact is epitomized quite neatly during the scene in which the Joker, Prince of Philistines, is trashing a museum-ful of paintings; he sprays a portrait of Founding Father Washington with a dollar sign, thereby rendering George-the-first much more cozily familiar.

### Go Figure These Figures

So why, then, are the crowds coming back and back to see *this* of all movies - and especially one so caught up itself in those contradictions of "going for the gold" which it paints in such unboxoffice-minded pigments of purest caustic (what Bruce-Wayne-rapid-fire-computer-head might venture to sort out the separate ravages wreaked upon the ecosystem in the manufacture of but a single line of those plastic, batwinged products being hawked to a public which sits down daily to see a whole other gospel being subliminally preached in the murky streets of Gotham?)

As Jack (Kerouac) once said, "everybody knows everything". At least, everybody *unconsciously* knows everything. It is not too difficult to suppose, then, that (in light of the present 111/2 hour crisis of the entire life-support system of this world) the actually peculiar, fiscally unsafe choices made by the creative and executive powers in charge of bringing us the SOth-anniversary celebration of *Batman* as well as the unprogrammatically "programmed response" of the public, reflects a submerged-obsessive acknowledgment that what has actually been filmed here - face-off between Batman and his nemesis the Joker included - is a documentary.

What happens when (rather than sink the maximum millions of dollars into a serious "epic" such as - in days gone by - the filmization of *Ben Hur*) the studios choose to sink comparable inflation-

dollar millions into the filmization of a comic strip, is that you end up with a documentary. In noir.

Oh yes; and the *criticism*; where is your friendly reviewer's actual, promised criticism? Okay, here it is: is it necessary to stick those little merchandising leaflets into *your hands* in exchange for your ticket when you enter the theater? Couldn't they just leave them on a rack near the aisle entrance where you could take one if you *wanted*!

### So: Does *Batman* Have Gong Fu?

One last thing: you've got to ask yourself - does *Batman* have Gong Fu? Yes, it oozes it - like the butter one doesn't get on one's popcorn - and especially Nicholson's noir homage to Richard Widmark's classic giggling psycho Tommy Uddo in *Kiss of Death*; if you think your local T-bird critic is reading such intention into it, take a look again at the hat and trenchcoat Jack N. wears as Jack Napier; and notice also how Widmark-like is the actor employed to play the young Jack Napier.



Batman.....\*\*\*\*

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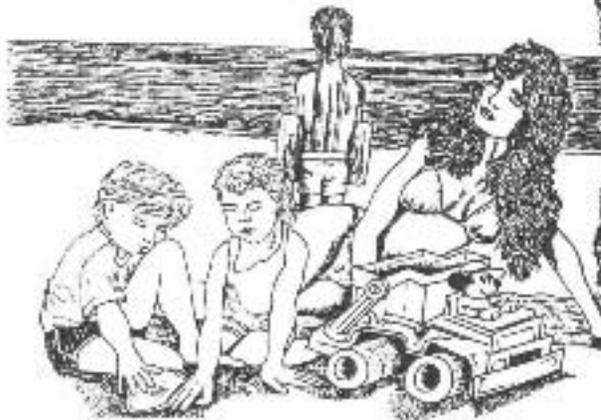
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