

## The Dark Side of Star Wars

Yeah, it's a great film. I've got five major problems with this movie.

### Number One. What's the deal with C-3PO's sexuality?

Okay, you can laugh, but think about it. Even though it—it is a genderless robot, "he's" treated by everyone as male, albeit sexless. Why does that resonate? Because we've seen this character before. Hey what's the stereotype of gay men? Let's see: effete, low in self-esteem, afraid of a physical fight, duplicitous out of self-interest, obsessive over their companions, and conscious of appearances. Uh ... C3PO exactly, huh? Try not to laugh when the droids fool the stormtroopers by hiding in a closet.

### Number Two. The heroic rebellion is whiter than a Martha Stewart dinner party at Texaco headquarters.

Apparently, in a universe where arms and legs sprout interchangeably, human skin doesn't even *tan*. Not even on a desert planet with two blazing suns. Oh sure, there's the token malt-liquor-ad black played by (who else) Billy Dee Williams ... but not until the sequel. Chewbacca however is a perfect sidekick. Why? Well, ignore the hair and you've got a stereotypical "good black": big and strong, prone to violence, and not too bright, but loyal, subordinate, and happy to do the heavy lifting. When blond-haired, blue-eyed Luke gets the idea to rescue Leia by pretending to escort a prisoner—uh, where do the cuffs go? Right on the big guy. It's only natural.

### Problem Number Three. It's a man's world.

Other than Luke's aunt, who cooks for the men-folk *twice* in three scenes before getting incinerated, we've got exactly one female here. And her stereotype—"Lay-a" ... cute pun, guys—contributes nil beyond: (a) pleading for help at the start via the droids and (b) throwing a hissy fit and leading everyone into a garbage bin. Feisty dialogue aside, she's really just a bouncy-nippled prize for the guys. In the climatic Death-Star assault, when the rebellion needs every pilot they can find, the only job for a *girl* is to sit at home and hope one of the boys will have saved them all. C-3PO stays behind too. But then ... we already know why *he* can't be a pilot. Meanwhile, Obi Wan and Darth literally cockfight over "who's the master"—slapping long hard cylinders they clench with both hands. Oh, *puhlease*.

### Number Four. What the hell does Han Solo smuggle?

Since mobsters like Jabba would gladly kill over his stash, it ain't tamales. So ... Drugs? Guns? Naked Ewok pictures? Notably, no one cares! As long as Han serves the rebellion. Uh, that's precisely the rationale the CIA used with drug smugglers in Nicaragua, Laos, Afghanistan, and everywhere else. Nice ethics to teach our kids, huh? And Han chickens out of the final dogfight, folks, showing up only to sucker-punch one peon bad guy after everyone with real cajones has already exploded in a fiery ball of Industrial Light and Magic. This is a hero?

### And ultimately, Number Five.

#### What kind of democracy is the rebellion fighting for anyway?

Oh, cursory mentions of a republic are made, but we've also got Princesses, Lords, and Jedi Knights. Okay, so a constitutional monarchy? Not if we trust our own eyes. The Princess considers herself entitled to *command* Luke and Han simply by birthright. Obi Wan's occult powers allow him to gleefully command weak minds against their own wills. (That's a manifestly fascist goal you know.) And the rebel alliance salutes Luke and Han with a boot-clicking phalanx every bit as robotic as the empire would hold. But most importantly, Luke's *destiny* is to become a Jedi just like his father.

So ... *greatness is genetic*.

Oooh, that's a dangerous idea. I seem to recall a few million people dying the last time somebody bought that one.

Bottom line, *Star Wars* is so entertaining that almost nobody notices its constant stereotypes, amorality and elitism. Just because a movie is *brilliant*, and it is, doesn't mean it's good.

