

***SAGA  
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# SAGA JOURNAL

*An academic Star Wars fan journal*

The Saga Journal is a monthly on-line academic review dedicated to the in-depth study of the *Star Wars* saga as presented in George Lucas's six-film series. Our goal is to deliver one of the best collections of scholarly essays on the subject that the internet has to offer.

Here at the Saga Journal, we believe *Star Wars* is more than just an enjoyable space opera set in a galaxy far, far away. We recognize it as a modern myth, a cultural phenomenon all its own. We want to encourage the literary exploration of all aspects of the story as presented in the Prequel and Original Trilogy films.

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Not Another Pathetic Life Form: Jar Jar as the Holy Fool, *by ami-padme*.....1

Chosen One: the Hero Myth of Anakin Skywalker, *by Lady Kenobi*.....4

Recommendation: *Christian Wisdom of the Jedi Masters*.....10

# Not Another Pathetic Life Form: Jar Jar as the Holy Fool

by ami-padme

The first episode of the *Star Wars* film saga, *The Phantom Menace*, is unusual compared to the other chapters of the story because of its façade of innocent joviality. Though the forces of darkness begin their ascent in this film, as the seeds of the falls of Anakin Skywalker, the Jedi Order, and the Galactic Republic are sown, overall the movie reflects a golden age that will not be seen again over the course of the six movies. The audience sees in the characters – both in where they are in their lives, how in they interact with one another – an expression of this happier and simpler time.

Jar Jar Binks is perhaps the most direct personification of the lighter tone found in Episode I. The Gungan outcast who befriends and accompanies the Jedi, Padmé, and Anakin on their adventures is a guileless, clumsy, and somewhat silly creature who becomes swept up in the various events of the movie. He provides much of the film’s humor and – along with a nine-year-old Anakin Skywalker – gives it a great deal of its childlike quality.

All of this fits the literary archetype of the Holy Fool. Although no one character will match all the characteristics of any particular archetype, it is easy to see how Jar Jar fits the definition of the Fool, and how his embodiment of this archetype works with and enhances the story of *The Phantom Menace*. Jar Jar’s kind, affable, and innocent ways contribute to the classic storytelling of the saga.

What makes a character a Holy Fool? First, one of the most basic characteristics of the archetype is that the character is almost always male, as Jar Jar obviously is.<sup>1</sup> However, the Fool also often has traits that are usually associated with weakness when held by men, and emotional expressiveness is one of them.<sup>2</sup> In literature, many fools and clowns wear masks to “cover up” their emotions, and make it socially acceptable for them to both act and speak out. Jar Jar does not wear a mask, or otherwise attempt to hide himself, but he is very open and expressive, and does receive some measure of consternation from other characters because of it. Jar Jar shows his fear when he feels it, such as when he complains to Qui-Gon Jinn about the dangers of Mos Espa on Tatooine, or when he is reluctant to return to the city of Otoh Gunga. He also never bothers to hide his joy – happily proclaiming, “Wesa going home!” when Queen Amidala decides she’s going to return to Naboo. Holy Fools often have exaggerated and honest reactions to what happens to them, and Jar Jar is no exception.

Those exaggerated reactions are related to another one of the Fool’s traits – the focus on humor and making others in the story laugh, and on finding ways to entertain them. *A Jungian Approach to Literature* states that, “Fools...represented a reversal of the normal order of things, and, as such, gave the impression of being...irreverent, and humorous.”<sup>3</sup> Jar Jar provides the majority of the comic relief in *The Phantom Menace*, whether it is done through his unusual accent and manner of speaking, his clumsy and accident-prone nature, or through his rather excitable personality. While we don’t see him tell deliberate jokes, we do see him inadvertently juggle on more than one occasion (his klutziness causes him to struggle to balance and hold onto several items in Watto’s shop, as an example), and he makes both Padmé and Anakin smile and laugh while also seeming to amuse Qui-Gon Jinn.

**Jar Jar Binks is perhaps the most direct personification of the lighter tone found in Episode I.**

This quality often causes the Fool to be confused with the archetype of the Clown, and indeed, the two are similar in their propensity to amuse. The main difference between the two is that the Clown is mostly associated with the common people, while the Fool is connected to people in arenas of power.<sup>4</sup> This can be seen clearly in the Shakespearean tradition, where the Holy Fool is often a member of the royal court, or otherwise is in the employ of the ruling class. Very early on in Episode I, Jar Jar meets two Jedi – the select protectors and guardians of the Republic – and joins them in their many travels. This eventually leads him to Queen Amidala of the Naboo, and other members of her royal court. At the end of the movie, he helps bring Queen Amidala together with Boss Nass, the leader of the Gungans. Jar Jar, like many other Holy Fools, particularly stands out because he is among the powerful, refined, and elite members of the society.

Fools often stand outside the normal social order in one way or another.<sup>5</sup> Jar Jar begins the story as an exile from his home community and continues to be the odd man out amongst the royals and Jedi that he finds himself in the company of. He symbolizes the divide between humans and Gungans on Naboo (along with Padmé), a divide he helps erase through his actions. He is uninvolved and seemingly unaware of the politics and maneuvering that takes place once the traveling party arrives on Coruscant. Fools throughout literature are outsiders in other ways – many were dwarves, mentally challenged, or possessed some other defect. Some of Jar Jar’s personality may be a more benign version of this trait. Historically, there was no derision meant in having the Fool possess these defects; acting as a court jester was a way to help such people maintain independence and make a living. Jar Jar is not meant to be derided either, and his simplicity leads him into important and career-establishing roles (as we see later, Jar Jar goes into politics and works with Senator Amidala and Chancellor Palpatine).

In his book, *The Fool and His Scepter*, author William Willeford says this about the way Fools are viewed: “The naïve view [is] that Fools are just silly, [while] the more refined view [is] that Fools show a kind of wisdom.”<sup>6</sup> In Episode I, Jar Jar is certainly viewed the former way, most notably by Obi-Wan Kenobi, who refers to the Gungan as a “pathetic lifeform” with some exasperation. However, Qui-Gon Jinn believes that Jar Jar may be helpful, and saves him from the wrath of Boss Nass at the film’s beginning, allowing Jar Jar to accompany them on their mission. The Jedi is later proven correct when Queen Amidala takes Jar Jar seriously enough to hinge critical parts of her plan to rescue her planet on Jar Jar’s information about the Gungan army. According to the book *Fool and Jesters in Literature, Art, and History*, “The influence of these [Fools] on monarchs...is often underestimated.”<sup>7</sup>

However, being around powerful people connects to another typical trait of the Fool that Jar Jar does not possess in *The Phantom Menace*. Often the job of the Fool is to give criticism of other characters, of society, or of the story’s events in a way that is incisive and truthful. The Fool’s humor and non-serious personality often serve as a cover, protecting him from the anger or retribution such comments would normally engender. This was often seen in Shakespeare’s various plays – the Fool was allowed almost unparalleled freedom in his speech, and his honesty often earned him the respect of rulers or monarchs.<sup>8</sup> While Jar Jar occasionally expresses views that are skeptical or critical of the Jedi or the Force – during the journey to Theed with Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan, for example – his function is clearly not focused on providing such commentary on the people or events surrounding him.

This lack of critical commentary makes Jar Jar more akin to a Dummling, a character archetype that is one of the variations on the Holy Fool. The Dummling is a “character who, although often simple-minded, acts with a good heart and is usually rewarded for it.”<sup>9</sup> This description certainly seems to fit Jar Jar, who is indeed kind-hearted and has a simplicity about him. He is rewarded at the film’s end: first, he is made a general in the Gungan army – clearly a position of honor – as a recognition of his role in bringing the Naboo and the Gungans together to fight the Trade Federation’s occupation of their planet;

during the parade after the battle, Jar Jar is treated as a hero by the jubilant crowd. This is similar to a character in the legends of King Arthur, Sir Dagonet, who served as the Holy Fool in that saga. He was knighted as a joke; however, once he appeared in the tournaments, he performed ably and bravely.<sup>10</sup> Jar Jar's commission is not made in jest, however, it has nothing to do with any skills he may or may not have in battle. Despite his fear and awkwardness on the field, Jar Jar acquits himself well in the battle, and in other parts of the movie. Dummings generally "[do] not so much impart wisdom as foster living with kindness and simplicity."<sup>11</sup>

Jar Jar Binks' function in *The Phantom Menace* is to provide some of the light-hearted and innocent tone that is so important to emphasize in the saga's opening chapter. By taking on the role of the Holy Fool archetype, Jar Jar adds humor and good-natured kindness to a deceptively happy movie.

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<sup>9</sup> "A Gallery of Archetypes"

<sup>10</sup> "A Gallery of Archetypes"

<sup>11</sup> "A Gallery of Archetypes"

# Chosen One: the Hero Myth of Anakin Skywalker

## by Lady Kenobi

*“You refer to the prophecy of the one who will bring balance to the Force.  
You believe it’s this...boy?”*

Within the *Star Wars* saga, there are many heroes. A great many of them go through the kind of Hero’s Journey codified and described in Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. However, the one person throughout the six stories that moves through the most complete journey, the most comprehensive story from beginning to ending, is Anakin Skywalker. It is his quest that drives the saga in the end. Taking the structures provided by Joseph Campbell in his book, it is possible to trace many of Anakin’s transformations from a “wonder child” to one who, through sacrifices and trials, redeems the world – or in the case of *Star Wars*, the galaxy. Like any individual mythical hero, Anakin will not match Campbell’s outline of hero transformations step for step, but he experiences an amazing majority of them, which are as follows: the Childhood of the Human Hero, The Hero as Warrior, The Hero as Lover, The Hero as Tyrant, The Hero as World Redeemer, and finally the Departure of the Hero. We shall begin at the beginning, with his birth.

Qui-Gon Jinn, the great Jedi Master who senses and discovers the child Anakin, at one point asks his mother Shmi about the boy’s origins. He does this because midi-chlorians, which can possibly determine the “Force sensitivity,” or ability to easily use the invisible power that the Jedi knights use, are hereditary. The more midi-chlorians, the higher the Force sensitivity. When he asks who Anakin’s father is, Shmi answers, after a difficult and guarded pause, “There is no father. I carried him, I gave birth to him. I raised him. I can’t tell you any more than that.” (Brooks, 145) After testing Anakin’s blood to find out he has the highest midi-chlorian count of any Jedi known, Qui-Gon theorizes that the midi-chlorians may have conceived him somehow, in a report to the central Jedi Council. While not entirely clear yet, this situation implies a form of a miraculous conception or birth, something common to many hero stories. The high midi-chlorian count also exemplifies Anakin’s inherently great power overall. However, his social status when Qui-Gon first meets him is not great for he is a slave. In addition, he is a slave on twin-sunned Tatooine, on the farthest reaches of the Outer Rim. His mother was a slave, now he is one also, prevented from escape by penalty of death. However, even he himself does not imagine this situation to last long. He dreams of becoming a pilot and leaving dusty Tatooine, but he also plans on coming back to free *all* the slaves. This alone could earn him hero status, but his future lies upon a different path.

Even without the miraculous birth or the illusions of grandeur, at only nine years old, Anakin is already showing the classic signs of the “wonder child motif.” To begin with, he is the only the human to ever participate in the famed pod races. These races are fast, dangerous, and for only the most daring citizens in the galaxy. And because of large prizes not only in money but in fame too, they are also Anakin’s ticket off of Tatooine. Using his intuitive “special powers,” Anakin enters race after race, though admittedly at the behest of his slave master. But the final race that he enters, the Boonta Eve, is the winning one; the one that signals the closing of one part of his life and the opening of another. Anakin knows this, thinking to himself:

*He couldn’t explain it exactly, but he knew that tomorrow [the Boonta Eve race] would change his life. That strange ability to see what others did not, that sometimes gave him insights into what would happen, told him so. His future was coming up on him in a rush, he sensed. It was closing fast, giving him no time to consider, ascending with the certainty of a sunrise.*

*Qui-Gon and his companions were the bringers of that change, but he did not think even the Jedi Knight knew for certain what the end result would be. (Brooks, 153)*

When Anakin wins the Boonta Eve race, he crosses one of the first thresholds on his journey, passing the first of many tests placed before him. This is even more so thanks to Qui-Gon Jinn, who, acting in a rather wily manner, gambles for and wins the freedom of Anakin from his slave master. Anakin is shocked but incredibly excited when he hears the news, but is quickly saddened when he learns that his mother was not also freed. Freedom means he can go away with Qui-Gon and train to be a Jedi. However, this freedom also leads to another test he must pass, one of leave-taking. His mother is closer to him than anybody else in his whole world, leaving her is an ordeal that may even have grave consequences in the future. Nevertheless, in the midst of saying goodbye, Anakin promises to return as a full-fledged Jedi Knight and rescue her from slavery. This promise holds within it his future path, but first we must visit one last example of the wonder child.

The political machinery involving the Jedi, Queen Amidala and Senator Palpatine grinds on subsequently, largely without Anakin, except for one major instance: the final space battle. On Coruscant, Anakin is denied training by the Jedi Council because he is too old. Qui-Gon, sensing Anakin's great destiny fights for his cause, insisting, "He *is* the chosen one, you must see that!" (Brooks, 237) – to no avail. Anakin is given permission to stay with Qui-Gon though as everyone travels on to Naboo to help the Queen save her people. During the final battle for freedom, Anakin is told to stay out of the way, but he is not fated for a small role. Seemingly by accident, he finds his way onto a spaceship, blasts off-planet and joins the raging dogfight. Something powerful is certainly with him as he flies into the enemy control ship, fires two torpedoes straight at the power source, and flies away to safety amidst the resulting explosions. The outcomes of all the different battle locations depend on this disabling of the control ship, so Anakin is really responsible for initiating the victories of all the "good guys" in the end. To the casual observer, it may seem impossible to believe that a nine year old child can accomplish so much. Again, this simply shows the power deep within Anakin Skywalker, the fated destiny he can and will fulfill no matter the intervening events.

When Qui-Gon is killed in a lightsaber duel with a newly risen Sith Lord, it now rests with his apprentice, Obi-Wan Kenobi, to train Anakin for Jedi knighthood. The Sith, sworn enemies of the Jedi, use the dark side of the Force in order to gain temporal power. The Jedi Council still has grave doubts about Anakin's clouded future, but they relent and grant Obi-Wan's request to take on his own apprentice. Many of the specific events of Anakin's Jedi quest during the following years still lie in shadow. This does not mean, however, that one cannot speculate some basic trends – including mythological ones – based on knowledge of Anakin's childhood, his fate, and his future, known from the last three *Star Wars* stories: *A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Return of the Jedi*. Two of Campbell's "transformations" apply during this time in Anakin's life, the Hero as Warrior and as Lover. In seeking Jedi knighthood, Anakin takes the first step into the life of a warrior. Jedi knights might be described as a combination of a medieval knight and of a monk, though also closely related to the Japanese Samurai warriors. They not only meditate upon the nature of the Force, but they are fierce warriors in battle. It is a precarious balance that must be strengthened daily, lest a Jedi fall into any form of extremism. As for the role of lover, Anakin falls in love with and marries Padmé Amidala, and together they will become the parents of the twins Luke Skywalker and Leia Organa. Interestingly, his incredible insight shows him some of this future quite early on. Witness the following passage from *The Phantom Menace*, when Anakin is nine and Padmé is fourteen:

*"I'm going to marry you," [Anakin] said suddenly.*

*There was a moment of silence, and [Padmé] began laughing again, a sweet musical sound he didn't mind at all.*

*"I mean it," he insisted.*

*"You are an odd one," she said, her laughter dying away. "Why do you say that?"*

*He hesitated. "I guess because it's what I believe..."*

*Her smile was dazzling. "Well, I'm afraid I can't marry you..." she paused, searching her memory for his name.*

*"Anakin," he said.*

*"Anakin." She cocked her head. "You're just a little boy."*

*His gaze was intense as he faced her. "I won't always be," he said quietly. (Brooks, 114)*

Indeed, he will not. However, Anakin's maturing years are fraught with danger as his loyalty, and his powerful abilities, are sought by different kinds of "masters." One is Obi-Wan, another is Chancellor Palpatine, the future Emperor of the Galactic Empire. Palpatine is "watching his career with great interest," while Obi-Wan does what he can in training. One cannot serve two masters, though, so Anakin – the Chosen One of Jedi prophecy – falls to the dark side.

Mythology is filled with stories of the greatest of all heroes making a journey into the underworld. What better representation of the underworld could there be than becoming Darth Vader? After a legendary battle with Obi-Wan Kenobi, Anakin emerges from the seeming defeat and scathing injuries as Vader, the Dark Lord of the Sith. Those injuries require the dark suit of armor and the infamous breathing mask. The evil Sith Lord, no longer entirely human, is single-handedly responsible for making the Jedi order extinct, among with other horrible, rage-induced actions.

Only Yoda and Vader's former master Obi-Wan escape the purge, though still losing much faith in the future – and prophecies. To them, Anakin-turned-into-Vader is lost forever. In his new life, he twists the ways of the Force into tools for evil. In service to his new master, Emperor Palpatine, he becomes the prideful tyrant. Prideful because he thought at the beginning, or was persuaded of it, that by joining forces with the obviously powerful Palpatine, he was doing good to lay the corrupt Old Republic of ten thousand years to rest. As the Emperor's Sith apprentice and right-hand man, Vader quickly rises in the Imperial ranks while gathering more and more power to his disposal. On the awesome battleship the Death Star, he even faces his old master Obi-Wan one last time. Obi-Wan is struck down by Vader, but not before out-witting him in the end. First, he somehow disappears without tasting the cruel edge of Vader's lightsaber. Secondly, and more importantly, he has already fulfilled his mission in helping Luke Skywalker, Vader's heretofore unknown son, begin his own Hero Journey.

Neither father nor son is aware of each other as Vader continues to commit rather unspeakable acts of evil. But at some point, Vader figures out who Luke is and begins to pursue him and his friends on a personal mission as they fight in the Rebel Alliance against the Empire, now truly revealed to be evil and much worse than even the corrupt Old Republic. On the cloudy, mysterious world of Bespin, serving as a mythical place of pain and betrayal for Luke and his friends, Vader reveals himself as Luke's father in an uneven lightsaber duel. Vader also reveals his plans for the two of them to rule

together, both already powerfully in touch with the Force. Luke escapes with his life – though losing a hand – only to meet his father once again in a climatic battle that both completes his own hero's journey and signals Vader's final transformations as a hero.

Both Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi had long ago lost hope in redeeming Darth Vader from the dark path he had chosen. His son Luke, though, knows that deep down inside, the wise and kind Jedi Anakin Skywalker still lived. Luke trains as much as he can after the near-disaster on Bespin, then moves voluntarily to the fateful confrontation with not only his father, but Emperor Palpatine also. On the way there, he confidently tells Vader, "I know there is still good in you." Vader talks about the power of the dark side, but finally sighs, "It is too late for me, Son." (Kahn, 426-427) Up in the Emperor's Throne Room, all three antagonists taunt each other as the last great battle between the Empire and Rebel Alliance rage on around and outside them. The Emperor, tired of Vader, is attempting to turn Luke to the dark side and destroy his father. Vader also wants to turn Luke, so that as father and son they may rule the galaxy together.

Luke, on the other hand, is mostly focused on finding Vader's hidden speck of humanity, bringing him back to the light side, and destroying the Emperor. The battle goes back and forth as Vader and Emperor try to turn Luke while he, largely untested so far, tries mostly to keep his emotions in check. Inadvertently, he reveals his knowledge of Leia Organa being his twin sister. Vader uses this revelation by threatening to turn her also. Luke lets go of his control, unleashes his anger and fear, and finally joins in a physical lightsaber battle with his father. Vader seems to weaken under this unleashed power until

**Now that he has acted as a kind of World Redeemer and finally rid the galaxy of the powerfully evil Emperor, all must prepare for the Departure of the Hero...**

Luke succeeds in amputating Vader's hand, which is mechanical. As Luke stares at the wires protruding from the stump that is his father's arm, he looks at his own prosthetic hand and realizes the dangerous path he had been treading. He also realizes that destroying Vader was exactly what the Emperor wanted of him. Luke throws down his lightsaber and proclaims his refusal to give in to the dark side. The Emperor, in a move of careless anger, sets out to kill Luke with "Force lightning bolts" powered by the dark side. In

one last desperate effort, Luke reaches out to the crippled Vader in a simple plea to a father's love. After a moment of deeply internal questioning, Anakin Skywalker overcomes his own dark self to reach out, pick up the Emperor and throw him down a bottomless shaft. It is done. The deed for which he had been conceived and born for, the act that only the Chosen One could have accomplished, is finished. Meanwhile in the larger battle arena, the battle has turned in favor of the Rebels, which is a chain reaction resulting from the death of the Emperor. Mortally wounded though, Anakin is now dying.

Now that he has acted as a kind of World Redeemer and finally rid the galaxy of the powerfully evil Emperor, all must prepare for the Departure of the Hero, Luke especially. He at first tries to rescue his dying father from the about to be destroyed Death Star, but Anakin finally tells Luke to leave him. Luke refuses, saying, "I've got to save you." Anakin responds with, "You already have, Luke." And with his final words:

*Vader pulled Luke very close, spoke into his ear. "Luke, you were right...and you were right about me...Tell your sister...you were right." (Kahn, 466)*

Here, then, is the death of the One Who Would Bring Balance to the Force. He had died twice really. Once, when he became Dark Vader, from which darkness he was reborn, and again after he had sacrificed himself to save his son and slay the Emperor. He goes now to join other Jedi in the oneness of

the Force, finally redeemed and complete. In tribute, Luke carries his father's body and dark armor that was Vader down to the forest planet below. There, while everyone else celebrates the end of the Empire, Luke bids farewell to the father he hardly knew:

*[He] stood in a forest clearing before a great pile of logs and branches. Lying, still and robed, atop the mound, was the lifeless body of Darth Vader. Luke set a torch to the kindling.*

*As the flames enveloped the corpse, smoke rose from the vents in the mask, almost like a black spirit, finally freed. Luke stared with a fierce sorrow at the conflagration. Silently, he said his last goodbye. He, alone, had believed in the small speck of humanity remaining in his father. That redemption rose, now, with these flames, into the night. (Kahn, 469-470)*

Moments later, Anakin appears ghostlike alongside two of his – and his son's – Jedi teachers, Master Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi, happy and purified at last.

From childhood, to adult years, to death, Anakin Skywalker transforms many times. Born as the Chosen One, he became the wonder child, fell to a dark lordship, sacrificed himself to be a savior, and died a redeemed father. He conquered both the light and the dark, knowing the later intimately, the only way he could fulfill his destined mission. And he brought balance to the Force by destroying Emperor Palpatine and eliminating the last living Sith in the galaxy. In doing so, he even went so far as to break through the very boundaries of the Force by bringing its two sides together and erasing the division between – the only one who could do such a deed. All of these transformations, some painful, some glorious, were needed to create Anakin the hero. The six stories that compose the *Star Wars* saga will always be the story of Anakin above all. Fated by prophecy, he ultimately fulfills his destiny and leaves a world purified through fire and love to his son and daughter, a new generation to proudly carry on the Skywalker name.

*“...And in the time of greatest despair there shall come a savior,  
and he shall be known as: THE SON OF THE SUNS.”  
Journal of the Whills, 3:127*

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The Journal of the Whills quote is from the second draft of what became A New Hope. Read this and others at “Starkiller – The Jedi Bendu Site”: <http://www.starwarz.com/starkiller/scripts.htm>

# Recommendation

## Spiritual Lessons from a Galaxy Far, Far Away

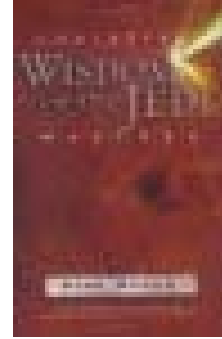
**Title:** Christian Wisdom of the Jedi Masters

**Author:** Dick Staub

**ISBN:** 0-7879-7894-9

**Publisher:** Jossey-Bass

**Copyright:** 2005



***Reviewed by Reihla.***

Prior to reading *Christian Wisdom of the Jedi Masters* I had never heard of Dick Staub. Being both Christian and wary of any book that explains faith in terms of pop culture, I decided to do a little investigating prior to reading. With little effort I discovered that Staub is a highly regarded nationally syndicated radio and television interviewer, the director of the Center for Faith and Culture and an adjunct professor at Seattle Pacific University. To be more specific, I found that he is a Christian and that the primary focus of all of his work is on modern culture and its relationship to religion.

*Christian Wisdom of the Jedi Masters* was, by Staub's own admission, a book written largely because Christian young people today want to be "Jedi Christians" but are following a generation who failed to produce any "Yoda-like" teachers. They have fallen away from their faith en-masse because it lacks the means to inspire them mentally and spiritually. He admits that he feels "Christianity is always just one generation from extinction" and describes the purpose of the book as a kind of mentorship. It is his hope that the book will deliver basic spiritual truths from one generation to another much as the Jedi passed their knowledge from master to padawan.

That isn't to say that the author has delusions of grandeur. He full well admits he is no master of Christian tenets, claiming that he knows his own embodiment of these truths is flawed. Still, with humility he explains his desire is to kindle the fires of spirituality in the next generation, to give them a point of divine connection to which they can relate. He explains the book as "an endeavor of love; an attempt to recover the lost sayings of the Jedi" in a Christian context.

As I read the book, I found myself surprised by the ease with which Jedi tenets translate to foundation principles of Christianity. Taking it even further, it was obvious that those same Jedi ideals could be applied to many other faiths. Indeed, Staub pulls wisdom from Buddhist, Jewish, Taoist and even mystical teachings and compares them to biblical wisdom. I believe people of all religious backgrounds, perhaps even those who claim no particular faith, can find something to enjoy in the reading of this book. It illustrates well the struggle of trying to adhere to one's beliefs while living in the modern world.

I found most of the *Star Wars*/Christian parallels to be effective (the wisdom of a child, power in the blood, prophecies, there is no try, just to list a few) the highlight for me was the chapter titled "Loving Your Father." Though I disagree with Staub when he states that Luke and Leia *both* forgive their father, he makes excellent use of Luke Skywalker's struggle to forgive Vader in an effort to explain why children should resolve negative feelings towards their own parents. He parallels Luke's parental struggle to our own by boiling it down to this: "You cannot control your parents' attitudes and actions,

but you can master your own, and in your hope, love, and forgiveness you can be healed and become a Jedi in the process.”

*Christian Wisdom of the Jedi Masters* is very much an encouragement to young people today to learn from those wiser than themselves and to pass on what they have learned, to become spiritual Jedi in their own realms of influence.

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