

Why is there so much hype surrounding the new Star Wars movie? Well, first and foremost it's a continuation of the storyline fans have been waiting for since 1983's *Return of the Jedi*. This is one of the biggest, if not the biggest Sci-fi fanbases ever, and of course they are hungry to see what will happen to their heroes next. This is STAR WARS we're talking about. The film series that revolutionized the genre.

But it's not just that the fans have been waiting a long time to see what's next. They got a chance to see what happened in the past in the 2000s' releases of episodes 1-3. Those episodes were a major disappointment, to say the least. Where do I begin. Ah, yes, Jar-Jar Binks. Episode 1 was filled with his antics, which Lucas apparently decided to include to appeal to every age group (kids). But in doing so, he essentially placed slapstick comedy in the background of many important scenes, totally distracting his viewers from the storyline. Jar-Jar Binks was the single biggest directing mistake I have ever seen or heard of. It's almost surreal. Just try to watch the whole movie and more importantly take it seriously, without getting frustrated at the obnoxious slapstick that takes over the screenplay. I remember as a kid watching that movie (I was 8) thinking it was so awesome, and wondering why the adults didn't think the same. And then my brothers and I proceeded to do that stupid Jar-Jar binks accent and pretended to shock our tongues or whatever of the many other imbecilic things Jar-Jar did, for weeks after seeing it. It was taken over by one character and made into a kids movie with some other stuff going on in the background.

And what is the point of Jar-Jar even being there anyway? It looks like Lucas had a little too much fun with his new CGI equipment and created the most ridiculous looking humanoid-animal he could think up, and just threw him into the movie. Which would be fine, except for the character's aforementioned obnoxious behavior, and the fact that there is LITERALLY NO REASON why he's in the movie. Qui-Gon and Obi-wan accidentally run into him and save his life during the opening battle, and he just decides that he now must follow them everywhere because they saved his life. Yes, he helps by bringing them to the Gungan kingdom, but after that? Why does this incompetent klutz of a creature need to follow Jedi around on official missions! These are Jedi we are talking about! They could easily just leave him behind, and they should have to preserve their mission! But for some reason that's just never addressed. Jar-Jar is simply made part of the crew.

In the next movie, Lucas clearly heard the critics loud and clear and toned down Jar-Jar's antics. But that too was unbearable. Blame it on bad directing and bad acting. Hayden Christensen as Anakin looked more like brooding teen than future powerful Jedi, although the brooding was supposed to be part of his character I suppose. I don't know. His delivery was off cadence, and he just came off robotic. The third movie was a bit better, but not much. Christensen improved his awful performance, but the screenplay and lines seemed robotic across the board. The only good performance across all three movies was Ewan McGregor as Obi-Wan. He was actually awesome. A real actor. Not just a guy saying some lines and making overly emotional faces (Christensen)

But getting back to the original point: Why are the fans so excited about episode VII? It's because it's being put out by a real, professional studio. Lucasfilm was a total joke. In fact, I've

read that the original three episodes would have been equally disastrous as the latest three if Lucas hadn't had several people reigning in his "creativity" (want to see what I'm talking about? Google "Star Wars Holiday Special") it's almost like the original three were produced by other people who had to deal with the additional challenge of not letting Lucas get his hands on his own film. But in the latest three episodes it was Lucas all on his own, and we saw what happened.

To many fans, Disney taking over the franchise represents a chance at redemption. An actual, professional studio with its hands on one of the most significant sagas of its time -- is there really any surprise that there's so much hype, especially after so much disappointment? For Star Wars fans, there is a New Hope.