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The Results Are In

Proposed Constitution of the
Student Polity Association, Inc.

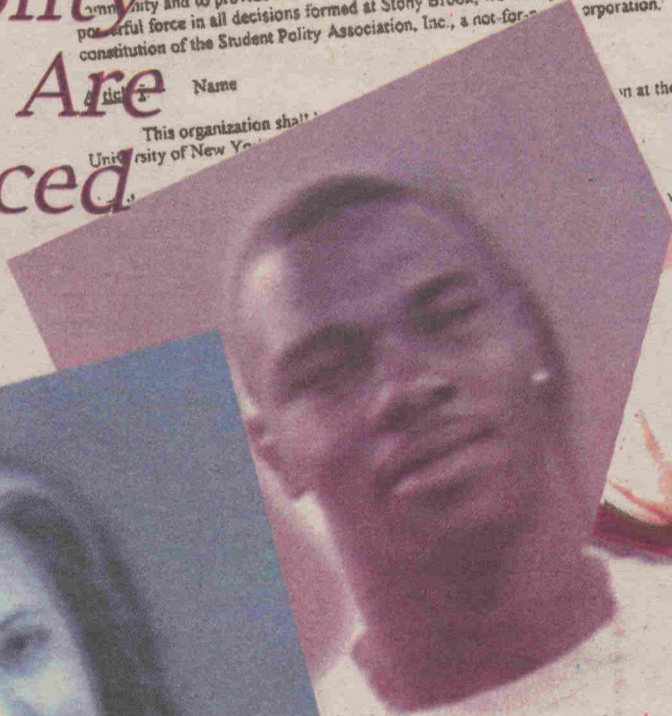
*The Winners
of the Polity
Elections Are
Announced*

The undergraduate student body of the State University of New York at Stony Brook is an autonomous unit within the University Community from which Student Polity derives its power. In an endeavor to foster a spirit of community, diversity and solidarity, to create programs and services for the benefit of all members of the campus community and to provide leadership ensuring the undergraduate student voice will be a powerful force in all decisions formed at Stony Brook, we hereby establish this constitution of the Student Polity Association, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation.

Name

This organization shall be known as the Student Polity Association, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation of the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

at the State



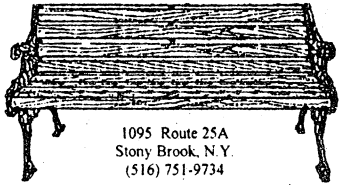
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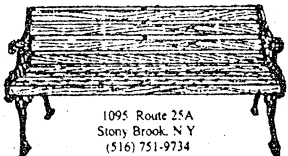
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Election Results Announced

By JENNIFER KESTER
Statesman Editor

After an election season delayed because of allegations of illegible petition signatures and controversy surrounding a new Polity Constitution proposal, the winners of the spring 1999 Polity elections and referenda were announced last week.

All undergraduate students were eligible to vote in the election, with only 12 percent choosing to do so.

The proposed Constitution, drafted by Polity Senator Brad Hausman, was passed 477 to 188. The new constitution will use a proportional student representation system as opposed to the former equal representation system. It also further separates the branches of the government, where the Polity Council will lose its voting power in the senate.

Andrez Carberry, formerly the Polity junior representative, won the race for president. Running against Vincent D'Amore on the Commuter Student Association ticket, challenger John Sulit, and write-in candidate Andy Auguste. Carberry snagged 578 of the 927 votes cast. He has been an active member of Polity for three years.

Carberry's platform focused on the need for unity among the student body. "I believe that the Student Polity is a great organization that should work in more direct ways with the students, combine all its entities and show the administrators, students and other powers that we are a force to be reckoned with," he said prior to the election.

For vice president, junior Calvin Coleman won over Claudine Stuart, who served as CSA president last year. With his experience as the sophomore and freshman representative, Coleman's goal is to cure apathy on campus that he said results due to lack of communication between Polity and the students. "The main thing I would like to see change on this campus is the fact that people say 'I did not know' or 'I had no idea,'" he said.

The closest margin of the election was that for secretary. Lisa LaBarbera won by the relatively small margin of 98 votes over opponent Heather Wilbur.

Winners:

President - Andrez Carberry

Vice President - Calvin Coleman

Secretary - Lisa LaBarbera

Treasurer - Renee Johnson

LaBarbera was treasurer for the Center of Womyn's Concerns and worked in the Polity suite.

LaBarbera said that student apathy was her central reason for running. "If anything needs to be improved at Stony Brook it's communication, not only between

students and faculty, but also students and their government," she said.

Renee Johnson won the treasurer position over opponent Brad Hausman. Johnson has had prior leadership experience with the Caribbean Students Organization, in the Polity bookkeeping office and as a member of the senate. She plans to create "activities that encourage diversity, fun and education," and is looking to improve the relationship between the University administration and Polity.

Other winners include Naomi Johnson for senior representative, Orlando Gonzalez for junior representative, and Malika L. Granville for sophomore representative.

Aside from the Polity Council seats, students also voted on five referenda from organizations seeking funding from the student activities fee for the next three years.

The New York Public Research Interest Group won an overwhelming 93 percent of the vote to continue its \$3.00 per student per semester fee.

The Ice Hockey Club, which competes in sponsored games against other university teams, won a continuation of its \$1.25 per student per semester fee.

The \$.50 per student per semester allocation for the Roth Pond Regatta was passed.

The Student Polity Association Events Management Staff - Reimbursement referendum received their \$2.50 per student per semester fee with an additional \$.50 per semester increase.

Asian American Center Under Construction

By TINA CHADHA
Statesman Staff

Did you ever wonder about the construction going on behind the Staller Center? For those of you that still do not know, it's the foundation for the Charles B. Wang Asian American Center.

In December of 1996 Wang, founder of Computer Associates International which is the second largest software company in the world, gave Stony Brook \$25 million to build a new Asian American Cultural Center.

The donation, which is the largest private donation in SUNY history, came about when SBU professor Gary Mar asked Wang for help in converting an empty corridor in the Physics Building into the Asian American Center. After several meetings, both decided that Asian American studies needed more than just a hallway.

The Center will be completed in the fall 2000 and architect Pao-Hwa Tuan is heading the project. The building will have abstracted red gates surrounding the main entrance. The most prominent feature of the building will be the 100 foot tall octagonal tower of glass and steel.

The Center will be divided into two sides. One side will contain a connected art gallery and museum, large lecture rooms, a theater and auditorium. The other will include computer facilities, student club rooms, lounges, administrative rooms, a reading room with international newspapers and journals, an oral history library and a

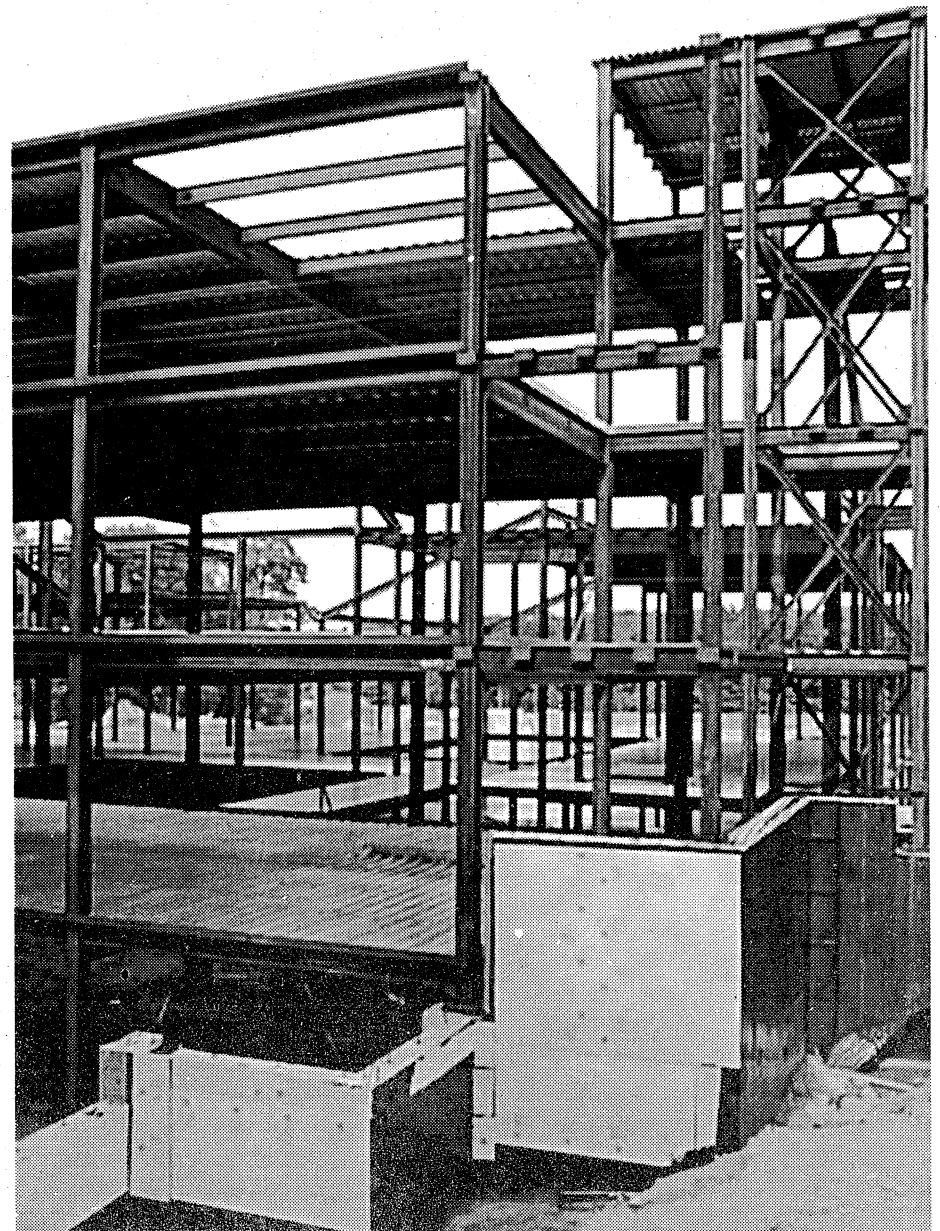
wedding chapel. A food court is also planned that will include foods from all over Asia.

Decorating outside will be twenty garden courtyards, each representing an Asian country. The most anticipated feature is the distance learning facilities. Video conferencing will be used so that professors and students at Stony Brook can communicate with those in Asia and all over the world.

Many wonder why Stony Brook has been chosen to receive this huge donation. "Mr. Wang's close ties with President Kenny and the relationship Computer Associates" are a factor said Gary Matthews, assistant vice president for facilities and services. "The latter being more important since Computer Associates has been active with the campus's computer science department. Businesses want access to the intellect and input from the students," he said, pointing out that the company's corporate headquarters are right on the Long Island Expressway.

Another factor could be of Wang's background. Wang is Chinese immigrant. At eight-years-old Wang and his family moved from Shanghai to Queens. In 1976 he graduated from Queens College, a member of the City University of New York.

"I do not want to construct classrooms or faculty office's for any one program or department," Wang said, "I want to build a bridge between Asia and America and Asian Americans and the majority culture and other minorities that would be used by everyone."



Statesman/Michael Kwan

The Asian American Center is under construction behind the Staller Center.

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Editorials represent the majority opinion of the Editorial board and are written by one of its members.

The Stony Brook Statesman welcomes letters, opinions and information about events and issues on or around campus. Write to:

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PO Box 1530
Stony Brook, NY 11790
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Campus Zip 3200
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Editorials

"Too Little, Too Late"

Now that finals are over and we are a few weeks into summer, the majority of us have probably seen our final grades from last semester's classes. Hopefully everyone did as well as they expected to, with a little luck maybe even better. While you look over your grade report, many of you might be kicking yourselves for not pushing a tiny bit harder. "What could I have done for that micro-point that would make that B+ an A-", you may ask. Was it that night you dozed off at the desk in the middle of chapter 22 of your bio textbook? It is because your best friend called just as you were about to make math flash cards? Maybe it was those few nights you got booted out of the library by the cops just as you were about to memorize the conjugations of Spanish verbs. No, you didn't misread that. On the nights preceding and including finals week, some of the University Police's finest could be found at approximately 12:15 a.m. asking students to leave the third floor of the library.

When the lights of the study areas in the main stacks flashed signaling closing, students drifted up the building looking for another place to study. After all, for many of us, midnight is just beginning of

Those Who Want to Study Pay Instead of Library Vandals

the night, especially with finals just days away.

And what better place to study but the library? Besides its books, one of its primary functions is to offer a quiet place to work when roommates don't know the meaning of 24-hour quiet time and working at home is just too distracting, or isn't an option. Well, you better look elsewhere because it's not happening at SB's library. In all fairness, most students are well aware of its official midnight closing. But the situation is typical of Stony Brook in its hypocrisy, irony, and just plain stupidity. First of all, the diligent students that used the third floor after hours could be found there at the same time and same place all semester. And the University Police wait until critical finals time to crack down on security?

Secondly, students can be kicked out, but anyone else can just walk right in through the many doors that can be found not just unlocked, but wide open after

midnight.

Upon asking about the sudden strict security, an officer responded to one student that the fifth floor had recently "been trashed" by vandals.

They asked the students to show ID because, you know, vandals always carry around textbooks, notebooks, calculators and pens and wait until they are bleary eyed and numb from studying before "trashing" things.

They also told a group of grad students in the private computer room on the same floor that they need "written permission" to use those facilities. They have the key - what more permission could they need?

Of course, they are just doing their jobs and taking precautionary measures to avoid more damage or vandalism and that is acknowledged. But should a group of hard workers striving for an A be penalized for the actions of a few vandals? And isn't it too little, too late? Where were they when the vandals were there?

The true people to blame are the vandals. But maybe this can send a message to the administration and give them a clue as to what they should be investing in. How about extending library hours? More cops? Security guards? There are many choices but interrupting studies should not be one of them, no matter what the time it is.

A Mirror of Society

To the Editor:

Your April 29th issue provides real insight into the state of our society. The first article describes the efforts by big corporate finance to convince us that all Americans should be investing more money in the stock market. This will put more money into their bulging pockets, and, better yet, it will get us used to the idea that everybody has plenty of money, that government social programs are unnecessary, and that poverty is the result of foolish financial habits. Too poor? Too bad.

On the next page, we see the English Department: a lovely example of how the Humanities, and the Liberal Arts in general are being gutted in public higher education. One of the reasons, of course, is that the conservative

forces in Albany are uneasy with the diversity of opinions expressed at universities. When we delve a few pages deeper into the *Statesman*, we see that there is also a more local reason, however. Millions of dollars are being spent on fountains while departments collapse, student-faculty ratios dwindle, class sizes swell, and the library of this "research center" remains fourth-rate. Someone, it seems, is more interested in showing off than in using tax and tuition dollars to produce quality education for the people of New York. Of course, if you've got the money, you can go to a private college. Too poor? Too bad.

And then we see the race issue. First the good news: Asian American students are pushing to see their experiences, contributions and "identity" reflected in the University curricula. Surely, a worthy cause,

and potential solutions abound: how about hiring some scholars of Asian-American literature for the English Department? Or historians of Asian-American experiences (Too bad our President didn't encourage Mr. Wang to endow some courses or faculty chairs...)? Finally, the bad news. The April 29th issue of the *Statesman* was one of the best in recent memory (aside from the uncritical presentation of the article on financial planning). But in the "Classified" section, we see an ad offering a \$10,000 business/employment opportunity... but only if you are "Caucasian." (It's an egg donor solicitation.) Too brown? Too bad.

Like I said: this issue provides real insight into the state of our society.

Respectfully yours,
Spencer Segalla

Hats Off to '99 Graduates

By RAYA EID
Statesman Contributor

Thirty-ninth Commencement Ceremonies Held

Faculty, family and friends gathered last week to honor this year's Stony Brook graduates at the 39th University Commencement Exercises.

The proud graduates and distinguished faculty members marched into the Sports Complex to a processional played by the Long Island Brass Guild. Following the march and the National Anthem, University President Shirley Strum Kenny gave the commencement address, congratulating the graduates for their hard work and wishing them luck in their future journeys.

"Commencement is a very special time not only for you, but for Stony Brook. It is the time when we know the importance of what we do because we realize the impact that you—our graduates—will have on the future," Kenny said.

The student speaker representing the class of 1999 was Sayed Ali, who gave a speech dedicated to all the mothers in the audience. Ali, a distinguished student with a degree in Physical Anthropology, also received the undergraduate Excellence Award and was

recognized as a Summa Cum Laude and a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. Ali also served as Vice President of the Student Polity Association and Chair of Polity Senate. In his speech, Ali described himself as a proud product of Stony Brook and he shared his various college experiences with the audience and classmates. After being raised in Nairobi, Kenya, Ali arrived to Stony Brook in 1995 to begin his college education and he suffered from what he called a severe "culture shock." Away from his home and family, Ali struggled to make a new life at Stony Brook. "I set my mind to achieve my goals and I learned to strive," he said. "I put all lessons together, I learned never to give up," said Ali.

Charles Johnson and Chen Ning Yang were among the few scholars to receive Honorary Degrees. Johnson, a professor, cartoonist, literary critic, screenwriter, television host and producer came to Stony Brook to work on his doctorate in philosophy. Johnson

has written four novels and 20 screenplays since he left Stony Brook in 1976 to teach at the University of Washington. Johnson's literary and creative contributions have earned him a National Endowment for the Arts grant, a Guggenheim fellowship, Southern Illinois University's creation of the Charles Johnson Award for Fiction and Poetry, and his naming as one of Stony Brook's 40 most illustrious alumni.

Yang, an Albert Einstein Professor Emeritus at Stony Brook's Institute for Theoretical Physics, was also an honorary degree recipient. Perhaps his most outstanding scientific achievement was receiving the 1957 Nobel Prize in physics. Yang joined Stony Brook faculty in 1966 as director of the Institution for Theoretical Physics, where he served up until his recent retirement in January 1999. Having served on several committees and academies, Yang is considered one

of the world's leading physicists and his presence at Stony Brook has helped Stony Brook emerge into an outstanding research university.

Many awards were given out to the graduates. This year's Ward Melville Valedictorian award, which is the University's most distinguished undergraduate honor, was given to two graduating seniors, Daniel Greenbaum and Ellen Hoffman, who have attained the most outstanding academic record during their four years at Stony Brook.

The ceremony concluded with the conferral of degrees by President Kenny whose voice was drowned by the sporadic cheers and waves of the graduates.

Graduate Teri McLaren received her bachelor's degree in psychology and graduated as a Summa Cum Laude and is a member of the Golden Key Honor Society. "It took me five years to get all of this, but I'm so thrilled right now," she said.

Proud father of graduate Carisa Manza watched the ceremony in tears. "It was a magnificent ceremony that brought out a lot of pride and essential accomplishments," he said.

Provost Rollin Richmond Receives Media Relations Award



Statesman/Peter Gratton

Statesman Editor in Chief Jennifer Kester handing Provost Richmond the award.

Provost Rollin Richmond has been awarded with the *Statesman's* semiannual media relations award for the spring 1999 semester.

The award is given to an individual in the community that has helped campus media, fostering a free campus press.

Richmond, the second recipient of the award, was chosen because of the many contributions he has made to the campus media. He is one of the few administrators that spoke out on issues important to the University ranging from the lack of tenured female professors to distance learning at Stony Brook.

We would like to thank him for his contributions and hope that he serves as an example for all on campus.

The URECA (Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity) Program wishes to congratulate the 1999 URECA Summer Fellowship Recipients:

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Classifieds

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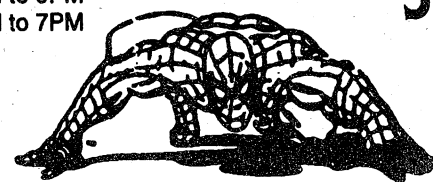
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Review:

A Positive Vote for Election

JULIE MINGIONE
Statesman Editor

Student government elections are most often associated with hopeful and ambitious teenagers, eagerly spouting out solutions to the dilemmas that plague their high school, with enthusiastic advisors helping them along. In the MTV Productions film "Election" director and co-screenwriter Alexander Payne satirizes the politics behind the race for student body president.

"Election" is an adaptation of the novel by Tom Perotta, and relates a tale of hypocrisy and corruption that takes place at George Washington Carver High School, in Nebraska.

Carver High history teacher, Jim McAllister, played by Matthew Broderick, is a three time Teacher of the Year recipient, known for inspiring his students to do great things.

The movie chronicles McAllister's career repeating the same information year after year to students who have bright futures and eventually make sizable fortunes, while he remains in Omaha. Unbeknownst to everyone, behind his respected teacher image, is a man with a collection of pornography in his basement, and an adulterous heart.

The election's ambitious and scheming front runner is Tracy Flick, played by Reese Witherspoon. A true overachiever, Tracy campaigns fiercely to win the title of student government president, and it is obvious that she will aim to win by any means necessary. And just as McAllister is not the model teacher, Tracy is far from the model student, as she had an affair with a married teacher during her sophomore year, who happened to be McAllister's best friend. His career and marriage were ruined.

Because of McAllister's distaste for Flick, and his dread at seeing her as student government president, he convinces the inept but popular Paul Metzler (Chris Klein) to run as well, much to the fury of Tracy. To add more of a taste of the MTV generation, Paul's lesbian sister Tammy (Jessica Campbell) also decides to run for president, in an attempt to get back at Paul, who had begun dating her ex-girlfriend. Her aim is to overthrow the student government completely.

As the campaign scurry ensues, Tracy, Paul, and Tammy each take a different course in pursuing their various goals. Tracy dreams of



Courtesy of the Election Movie Website

Reese Witherspoon stars in the dark comedy "Election" by MTV Productions.

attending an ivy league university, and desires to have the title of student government president added to the list of activities on her college transcript. The simple minded Paul, only in the election because of McAllister's prodding, is not interested in winning, but merely in playing football, and maintaining his popularity. Tammy gains the support of the student body when she delivers an apathetic speech, promising to do nothing if elected president, since everyone knows that student government implements no changes, and that students will always be miserable, no matter who the president may be. The indifference expressed by Tammy is one of the most poignant aspects of the movie, because it is not the typical attitude towards high school politics in popular culture.

Alexander Payne artfully engages the viewer in this complex tale of the motivations behind people's actions. The implications of this movie suggest that corruption begins in the classroom, from the administration to the students. Exposing political immorality on such a small scale makes for a poignant and funny movie chronicling the progression of young democracy. With all the films geared towards teenagers in recent years, "Election" emerges as a rare combination of wit and satire, that proves to be humorous and smart throughout.

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Robert Wlodarczyk*



Features

The Star Wars Hype

Phantom Menace Storms the Box Offices

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The hype surrounding the recent release of "Star Wars: The Phantom Menace" has been gargantuan in proportion to movie releases of summers' past.

The film premiered on Wednesday, May 19 to masses of excited fans. Was the movie worth the sixteen-year wait?

In terms of eye candy and sheer atmosphere at the initial showings of the movie, the answer is a resounding yes. Children, teens, and adults alike came equipped with props and costumes to see the show. Many were decked out in the outfits of old characters, like Obi-Wan Kenobi, Darth Vader, Princess Leia, and Luke Skywalker. Other fans, who obviously did some homework before the movie, came dressed as characters that are introduced in the film – most notably Vader's predecessor Darth Maul – and the computer animated alien Jarjar Binks. Other movie goers carried lightsabers and grappled before and during the movie. At Port Washington's Soundview Cineplex, the manager announced that any patrons waving lightsabers in front of the screen would be immediately escorted out. Still, the excited mood prevailed.

The theater experience is worth it simply because seeing the new Star Wars movie is nothing like going to your local screening of "A Midsummer Night's Dream", or even "The Matrix."

At a showing in Syosset, the movie was unexpectedly stopped in the middle, and moviegoers, instead of resigning themselves to the hassle of collecting return tickets, threatened to battle theater administrators with their plastic lightsabers. It has been reported at many

theaters that some viewers are moved to tears as the lights go down and the show begins.

In terms of special effects, the movie is eons beyond any movie that has ever been released in the science fiction genre. During the film, the viewer is never without something to look at or inspect. The spectacularly designed pod race scene is reminiscent of the speeder scene in "Return of the Jedi," which was then thought to have revolutionized the special effects industry. No one doubts director and producer George Lucas's technical savvy and vision. Instead, critics are harpooning the story and character interaction in the film.

The film itself does serve to clarify and explain a great deal to fans of the Star Wars universe.

The newly introduced Queen Amidala, played by Natalie Portman, is the girl who will eventually become of the mother of Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia. Young screen veteran Jake Lloyd depicts Anakin Skywalker, the precocious youth who will eventually take on the alter ego Darth Vader, but not before marrying the young queen and fathering her children. A new character, a fully computer animated comic element, named Jarjar Binks, is more of a technological feat than an element in which the writers were concerned with relevance and purpose.

In terms of direction, Star Wars seems poor. It is unlikely that George Lucas will be nominated for any awards for this movie. In terms of standard movie tactics, Lucas has seemingly ignored all of them. No real attention is paid to the physical movement of the characters, to the interaction between them, or to the lines they speak.



Courtesy of the Star Wars Website

Liam Neeson plays Qui-Gon Jinn in the Phantom Menace.

The appearance of the scenes lacks the impact of the original trilogy. It is obvious to any viewer not sidetracked by the grandeur of the effects that the acting is, at times, flat, and the plot, while tight, could be better scripted.

After the release of the film, the film was lambasted by critics, who accused it of being nothing but bells and whistles. Fans, on the other hand, do not seem to care. "Star Wars: The Phantom Menace," is expected to beat the opening record set previously by "Jurassic Park", and the profit records set by

"Titanic" in 1998. This is a movie that most of the American public will not ignore based on reviews. It is an event, and is not being plugged as a cinematic masterpiece.

One thing is for certain. Though the new Star Wars may not be the next "Citizen Kane," it has set a precedent for every science fiction movie that will be produced from now on. Gone are the days of stock NASA footage and model spaceships on elaborate dioramas. Lucas and his company, Industrial Light and Magic, have certainly lived up to their name.

-AP contributed to this article

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