

Star Wars IX Offers Something for Everyone

by [Michael G. Maness](#)

Tyler County Booster, Jan. 2, 2020, 4A.

In the summer of 1977, I waited for Star Wars to begin in Dallas.

At the time, it was just another movie. I was a young man going college and went to the movies to escape, to voyage, to be entertained.

Then it began, the text scrolling up and away into the starry sky, and the magnificent pulsating musical score promised intrigue.

Stunning—it was the best movie I had ever seen. Many friends thought so too. In the next few years, I returned to see it a couple more times. Some said they saw it 30 times and more. After DVD were created, I had buy it.

In '77, George Lucas was planning a low-budget sequel, himself not even dreaming that Star Wars would become one of the most successful of all time. After the quick success, Lucas himself wrote the sequel, and *The Empire Strikes Back* came out in 1980.

The Star Wars saga took off.

Trilogy, prequel-trilogy, sequel-trilogy—oh my—indeed, the universe was expanding. I gather that this is the end of this sequel-trilogy, but by no means is it the end of the universe Star Wars created. The merchandizing, comics, video games grew planets of their own. Over 1,000 different novels have sold over 65 million. In 2012, Disney bought Lucasfilm for \$4.06 billion, and Disney's bottomless pocketbook expanded its booming theme parks and promises many more sequels.



Yet, way back in 1977, there was no competition. The frustrated farm boy Luke Skywalker discovered a video message in a secondhand droid. Luke meets the smuggler Han Solo, and together with the beautiful Princess Leia and hairy Chewbacca they set out to save the Rebellion from the Empire and the menacing Lord Darth Vader.

Yoda and Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi instruct in the Force.

Tug on your heart, the intriguing characters did. The reluctant, diverse crew grow to like each other and become good friends as they fight against impossible odds.

In '77, just who was the protagonist? Luke, Han, Leia, Chewy? Excellent, they were.

Today, the '77 tech seems a tad campy, but back then we rode with Skywalker, and our hearts hoped they would succeed against the Empire. We had never seen anything like it.

Lucas set a new cinema standard, and since then an entire subculture has evolved.

Now, 43 years later, I sit in a plush recliner with my 3D glasses on, and—like the previous eight—the text scrolls up and away into the starry sky. The magnificent now classic, iconic soundtrack plays ... yet not really plays ... the musical score invigorates an ethereal anticipation.

I have done this eight times before. There is no other saga like this, and there likely never will be again. In '77, there were no personal computers, and I typed my school papers on a manual typewriter—only the rich had electric typewriters. Yet I watched the Millennium Falcon hit light speed with a crew that would become legends in my own time.

Star Wars is a saga of my generation that has crossed all borders of age, race, and culture.

Last Friday, I sat again and waited. This is Star Wars, and the sold-out theater knew we were going for another unique ride to places unknown with old friends meeting new ones.

As Disney now takes charge, we know that no expense will be spared in technology, casting, wardrobe, and exquisite color.

By itself, *The Rise of Skywalker* is a good movie.

What makes this ninth entry so grand and tantalizing is the struggle that we are pulled into, by proxy or transference, for we truly are part of decades of characters fighting tyranny.

The Star Wars universe has something for everyone. The genius is how a group of strangers are thrown together and grow to become friends on a dangerous and noble mission.

This mission they must pursue, must complete, or lose their way of life to tyranny.

The new lead, Rey, is a reluctant nice-looking young woman, not quite charming, but confident, intelligent, and daring. In a previous film, her life as a poverty-stricken scavenger made her tough. Impelled by her strong sense of duty, she continues to discover her destiny. With Chewy, Finn, Poe, and crew, they form more bonds, and their loyalty overcomes betrayal.

As we expect, *The Rise of Skywalker* pulls together from all the previous ones. The “Force” has some new powers, and Rey ... well ... you will have to see for yourself. May the Force be with you, too.

The old is passing the lightsaber to the new generation, and with Disney’s peerless artistic innovations the universe will continue to expand.