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FILM REVIEW: STAR WARS – THE LAST JEDI



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By Benjamin Lacey

For being a part of one of the most successful and beloved film franchises of the past 50 years, "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" has received a lot of backlash from critics and fans alike. I, for one, thoroughly enjoyed the movie due to its fresh story ideas, complex character development and surprise plot twists.

One of the main complaints against "The Force Awakens" was that it recycled the exact same story as "A New Hope." Because of this criticism, the writers and directors of "The Last Jedi" did an excellent job of coming up with a fresh story that kept audiences all across America on the edge of their seats. It really was unlike anything that I had seen before. During most of the movie, the vast majority of the Resistance was on a spaceship. As the name implies, "Star Wars" takes place in space, but for most of the other films, most of the action takes place on planets, moons or intergalactic space stations.

NU's Dr. Jeremy Delemarter, a well-known Star Wars fan, agreed that "The Last Jedi" has a gripping plot and that it didn't fit any plot pattern he knows. One model of these plots is the Four Seasons model. "Old Star Wars," Delemarter said in reference to the original six movies, fits into the Summer pattern. This means that we are never worried for the outcome of the movie, that everything is going to work out in the end. "The Last Jedi," on the other hand, doesn't fit this or any of the other three seasons. People die in tragic and unexpected ways and at very inconvenient times.

As in every good film series, "Star Wars" has always been about the characters. The original characters are all very interesting, but in "The Last Jedi," the character development is fantastic. Kylo Ren isn't purely evil; he wrestles with the good and bad inside of him. Luke Skywalker is not completely righteous; he makes terrible life choices and judges people at a glance. Rey is not immediately trusting of the legendary Luke Skywalker; she doubts his motives and morals, especially after Kylo Ren tells her the events that transpired between him and his former mentor. In terms of character development, one of Dr. Jeremy Delemarter's favorite things about "The Last Jedi" is that Poe Dameron, the hot-shot pilot, gets his "butt kicked by a bunch of women." This is a big turn around from him being seemingly infallible in "The Force Awakens."

Another thing "Star Wars" is known for is plot twists. The most famous plot twist is the revelation that Darth Vader is Luke's father. "The Last Jedi" is rife with a twisting plot that keeps upending itself. My favorite example of this is the scene that takes place in Supreme Leader Snoke's throne room, when Kylo Ren surprised everybody by using the Force to plunge Luke's lightsaber into Snoke, which is another display of the moral struggle happening within him. Ren is originally fighting against Rey, then suddenly decides to help her defeat Snoke and his guards, then turns on her once again due to his power-hungry pride. At the end of the movie, as Delamarter noted, the Resistance is defeated and the First Order finally has a chance of complete Galactic domination.

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