Sean Jackson

**STAR WARS EPISODE 1: THE PHANTOM MENACE**

The chronological beginning of Star Wars is a film that just doesn’t sit right with me, I feel like this film shouldn’t exist actually. I feel like George Lucas made this movie as a result Titanic’s success and tried to make a film to stay on top of the cinematic ladder. Now, my first issue with this movie is the fact that this doesn’t exactly have a main protagonist. Many think that it would be Anakin Skywalker, whom later in the series turns out to be Darth Vader, but we don’t meet him until 45 minutes into the movie. Also, Anakin is a small child and all the events happening in the movie are completely out of his control or understanding. The characters Obi-Wan Kenobi, Qui-Gon Jinn and Queen Amidala aren’t the protagonists either, because they lack any kind of emotion and don’t exactly care about the mission that they are on resulting in the audience not being able to relate to them. The character in this movie lack any strong characteristics unlike the characters in the original trilogy of Star Wars where you can break down their character without even saying what they looked like or what their role in the film was.

Secondly, the story for this movie makes no sense to me. So, the film opens with the Jedi (Obi-Wan and Qui-Gon) land on a space station that looks like a half-eaten donut to discuss a trade dispute with two aliens that sound vaguely Chinese which is a little racist in my opinion, but I’ll talk more on that later. Anyway, the two aliens are called the Separatists, and they work for a cloaked figure they might as well be Satan. So, while waiting on the Separatists to meet them, the Jedi sense that something feels really off about this whole situation as they drink tea that could have possibly been poisoned, that is genius. Now, we move on to my favorite part of this movie, this scene makes no sense to me at all. So, the separatists, on the order from the cloaked figure, blow up the Jedi’s ship and then pump in deadly white gas into the room the Jedi were in and Qui-Gon instantly recognizes what kind of gas it is. Yes, he smells the deadly white gas and knows what it is, isn’t that a contradiction? He smelled the deadly white gas and didn’t die? Maybe he got a little whiff of it. Why didn’t they just tell the Jedi to leave? They could have told them that they wanted to reschedule the meeting. Keep in mind, this is just the beginning of the movie, I’ve only just scratched the surfaced. I’ll just move on to later in the movie when we meet the character of Anakin Skywalker. Anakin and his mom are slaves on the desert planet Tatooine, however, they don’t act like they are enslaved, and it seems that they have a home and the same rights as anyone that isn’t enslaved. Also, the flying bug-like being that owns them sounds like a Middle Eastern car salesman, remember the racist thing I mentioned earlier? Yeah, it’s a bit bad in this movie. Anyway, so Qui-Gon is able to get Anakin off the planet, but not Anakin’s mom. Qui-Gon wants to train Anakin in the ways of the Jedi, but the Jedi Council sense evil in this seemingly innocent little child. At the end of the movie, the Jedi agree to let Obi-Wan train Anakin after Qui-Gon got killed, even though they all sensed great evil within this small child. Does that make any sense? The downfall of the Jedi is all on the Council and no one else.

Lastly, I feel this film is just all about the visuals. Now, I’ll admit the visuals are top-notch, however, since this was made in 1998/99, some of the scenes in the film look incredibly dated like the Yoda puppet and obvious blue screen for example. Speaking of blue screen, 98% of this movie is computer generated, so it’s tough for the audience to really get into this movie because it looks incredibly fake. What I loved about the original trilogy is how authentic everything was, it felt like an actual universe that people lived in instead of shiny bright colors that only computers can generate.